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# The AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

JANUARY

1926

Write Because You Must

*By Chauncey Thomas*

—  
Please Revise

*By Ralph R. Perry*

—  
Driving the Idea Home

*By Arthur Hawthorne Carhart*

—  
Ventilated Villains

*By Talbot Short*

—  
Essentials of Plot and Climax

*By Willard E. Hawkins*

—  
Literary Market Tips

*What the Magazines Are Buying This Month*

Volume XI, No. 1

FOUNDED 1916

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The Author & Journalist, 1839 Champa St., Denver, Colo.

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BY A. H. BITTNER

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DAVID RAFFELLOCK

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WILLARD E. HAWKINS, *Editor*

EDWIN HUNT HOOVER

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL  
*Associates*

DAVID RAFFELLOCK

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WRITING in *The Publishers' Weekly*, Joseph Lewis French makes some interesting observations in which, despite their sarcasm, the fiction writer can find hints for putting into his stories those elements which enthrall the public. In part, he says:

"Edmund Lester Pearson, who as a connoisseur in these matters stands at one end of his century as DeQuincey does at the other, recently put it to me in this way: 'Everybody,' said he in a matter-of-fact manner befitting the essential truth of the matter, 'is interested in crime and criminals for the simple reason that they involve a phase of life apart—different—and therefore strange and mysterious. The criminal dwells in a world of his own. Nothing better delights your average smug citizen than to plunge his head, as deeply as he innocuously can, into the pages of a book, in a comfortable easy chair, and sniff and swallow

the sights and sounds and smells unholy of the underworld. We all know about 'Fireside Travels' done in a rocking chair, but no journey of them all is more interesting to a very large body of us than that which takes us into these forbidden realms. Here is an example: as a librarian I have long known, as do thousands of readers, two companion volumes; one recording the Lives of Good Men, and the other the Lives of Bad Men. Experience has demonstrated that the latter volume is always 'out' while the former stands serenely upon the shelf. The element of speculation enters largely into our interest in crime,' continued the author of 'Studies in Murder.' 'Every crime is a gamble—the bigger the crime, the bigger the risk—murder being the greatest one of all. The stakes in any great crime are great, and the chances of punishment tremendous. In the realm of sport, the same instinct of attraction presents itself. It is as easily demonstrated today as in the

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days of old Rome that the masses like best the game in which the greatest risk is combined with the greatest punishment to the player. In plain words—I hate to be brutal—the more the game hurts, the bigger the crowd that attends to absorb the spectacle.

“With the masses crowding to these sports is it any wonder that they devour stories of crime, that the detective story and the murder mystery have within a couple of decades become classics with us? Why are murders always on the front page of the dailies? Simply because of that elemental spirit—it ought to be called childish in view of the general progress of civilization—of sheer curiosity, which prompts us because the murderer has taken a tremendous risk, and may have to pay for it with his life. Let me just add that there are two tags to a murder—first the psychological one involving the motive and the mental processes of the criminal, and second the physical one involving the question how did he do it? Both are mysteries eagerly seized upon by the masses, who, heaven knows, might be better employed.”

“Both literary authority and trade buyer alike report that the story that centers about a crime (we are not discussing the ethics of the situation) is getting an increasing grip upon the great reading public. As a final and not altogether facetious commentary, why is the whole new field that centers about the great romance of rum running, of bootlegging by land and by sea with its multifarious and many-colored adventure, still quite undeveloped? Is not the ‘hi-jacker’ the old pirate come to life again and operating in full career in our home waters? Are not his exploits by land of thrilling interest? We have his compeer in the gunman, that great original product of American civilization. Who has not read the ‘Mystery of a Hansom Cab’? Why not the ‘Mystery of the Armored Car’? Why not? Never has civilization advanced to such heights, such pinnacles, such glories of crime as in America within the past decade. Awake ye authors! Arise and shine! America has again proved herself the great land of opportunity, the harvest is ripe for the sickle!”

OCCASIONALLY THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST is “taken in” by enterprising persons who doubtless consider themselves clever in obtaining free advertising for their more or less doubtful schemes. It is impossible to investigate thoroughly all publications that send in notices of their market needs. Rather than delay getting the “tips” before readers, our custom is to publish market items that appear authentic on the surface, making clear our sources of information. However, the warning cannot be too frequently given that authors should exercise care in submitting manuscripts to new magazines, as experience has shown that nine-tenths of such magazines, aside from those launched by firms of established reputation, are doomed to failure at the outset. They are poorly planned, by persons of

insufficient experience, who rarely have any conception of the financial backing that is necessary to put even a well-conceived magazine on its feet. The promises of the publishers as to rates and methods of payment may have been made in good faith, but cannot be carried out.

Occasionally, a scheme for obtaining free advertising for a typing or revising agency, or similar concern, is masked foolishly beneath an innocent-appearing announcement that comes to our desk. We say foolishly, because the schemer inevitably is discredited in our next issue, and those who may have been attracted by his bait are always made too angry by the subterfuge to be caught.

In the latter class of tips belongs the announcement published in our December issue of a new Minneapolis magazine, to be known as *National Thought*. Mr. Harlow Ross, the editor, in sending this “tip,” announced that a “substantial rate on acceptance” would be paid for articles on political and social economy and the practical sciences. He neglected to mention, however, the condition which is divulged to those who submit manuscripts in response to his call. Such authors apparently are favored with a long typewritten letter explaining that in order to become eligible as contributors to *National Thought* they must first become members of The Writers’ Co-operative Association—which membership costs \$5.00. Surely no one would hesitate to pay this small fee, for, to quote from the letter: “Membership in this association means that you can have your complete writings for one year published in *National Thought* and that these writings will be paid for at the rate of 5 cents per word maximum, upon acceptance. Membership also means that you are entitled to receive the assistance for the period of one year of our complete editorial staff, as concerns your future writings and as there will be a great number of assignments to be dealt with, this would mean a great deal to anyone.”

Doubtless, many writers attracted by the publication of this supposed “tip,” for which we humbly apologize, are busily figuring how heavy their income tax for 1926 is likely to be, taking into consideration the probable amount of their “complete writings” for the year, and Mr. Harlow Ross’s philanthropic promise to publish and pay for all these at 5 cents a word upon acceptance. We sincerely hope the “complete editorial staff” may be able to keep a jump or so ahead of the post-office inspectors, until it has elevated a large number of prolific and deserving young writers into the millionaire class.

THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT, in a decision rendered October 12th, established a ruling that the broadcasting of a copyrighted musical work is a “public performance” thereof, within the meaning of the copyright law, and may not be lawfully done except by license of the owner of the copyright. This ruling undoubtedly has a bearing on the

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broadcasting of plays or other literary material. The Supreme Court decision was in the nature of a denial of a petition for a writ of certiorari to the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of Jerome H. Remick & Co., owner of musical copyrights, against the Crosley Radio Corporation. The Circuit Court held that a "radio artist is consciously addressing a great though unseen and widely scattered audience and is therefore participating in a public performance."

A CERTAIN WRITER, building a house for himself, was careful to provide an attractive, well-lighted study, which would be an inspiration for creative work. In the study he installed a handsome mahogany desk, arranged with convenient filing devices, equipped with all the materials for writing, and with reference books close at hand. Other writers envied the possessor of this study and mused upon the vast amount of creative work they could do if they possessed such facilities.

But the writer was wise in his generation. He had been through the mill before, and he knew that his study would be littered with toys and sewing materials, his desk covered with children's crayons, paper dolls, paste and other sticky substances, his wife's correspondence and bills. He left them undisturbed and did his work on a soapbox in a corner of the basement storeroom.

THE LITTLE SUBSCRIPTION "POEM" we have been in the habit of sending as a reminder to subscribers when renewal time rolls around, prompted a couple of rhymed responses this month. We cannot resist the temptation to reproduce them:

How dear to the heart is the author's own journal,  
Worth more than its price at the birth of each year.

We lay down our money, and do it quite gladly,  
For you help on our work, and thus bring the goal near.

We may think: "I must stop it; I cannot afford it,"  
Though knowing quite well it's the one thing we'll read

When times are 'piano,' and dinner uncertain,  
A pull at the belt has to cover our need.

So, if my small check, when it reaches your sanctum,  
Has force enough in it to make your heart dance—  
I'm awfully glad. You've a jolly good paper—  
It's only my thanks which I pay in advance.

—M. RAY WILLIS, San Francisco.

How dear to my heart is your dear little journal,

Which the postman delivers each month at my door,

And the pleasure it gives me, as I read it monthly,  
Leads me to subscribe, for at least one year more.  
I could truthfully say I am taking too many,  
And that I lack time to read 'em all through;  
But if I determine to leave out your journal,  
I know that I'll feel most decidedly blue.

So here's the two dollars, I'll not miss a number.  
Tho holiday time always leaves me quite flat,  
And if Santa Claus shuns me, and leaves me no present,

At least I've provided for one—and that's that!

JULIE D. CARDER, New York City.

THE PSEUDONYM of Talbot Short, whose "Ventilated Villains" we are presenting this month, conceals the identity of an editor in one of America's best-known magazine publishing houses, who is also a prolific author of fiction.

THE VERDICT of one of the AUTHOR & JOURNALIST editors on reading "Write Because You Must," by Chauncey Thomas, was "unintelligible." Another enthusiastically termed it "great." But the latter read it several times. We believe it will pay others to do likewise. Chauncey Thomas is a name with a wide following, especially among readers of outdoor magazines. He was for many years on the staff of *Outdoor Life* and several years ago wrote a great deal of fiction. His greatest hobby is gunnery, and he is an authority on ballistics. The distinction of having a mountain in Colorado named after him was accorded him in recognition of his most famous short-story, "Why the Hot Sulphur Mail Was Late," first published in *McClure's*, frequently reprinted, and often referred to as "The Snow Story."

ARTHUR HAWTHORNE CARHART, author of "Driving the Idea Home" in this issue, is a versatile writer who contrives to write and sell numerous articles to *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Country Life*, *American Forests* and *Forest Life*, *Outlook*, and sundry other magazines, and short-stories and novelettes to *Blue Book*, *Ace High* and others, in the course of a busy career as a landscape architect. He has especially capitalized in articles and fiction the experience gained while he was connected with the U. S. Forest Service. Recent helpful articles from his typewriter in THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST will be recalled, notably "Theme in Article Writing" and "Tone Color."

A READER picks us up on a chance phrase in a book review published recently, "The many who apparently read and enjoy Westerns will enjoy this." "If you don't read and enjoy them," he demands, "why devote so much space to Western-story writing and markets?" \* \* \* As the quoted comment stands, it looks innocent enough to us, but evidently the sense of amazement we feel at the popularity of the Western yarn crept into our phraseology, despite lack of intention. Having thus unmasked our feelings, let us "come clean." Frankly, we can no longer work up enthusiasm for the average Western story. An outstanding piece of fiction we appreciate, even if its locale is Western—but somehow we seem to find few outstanding pieces of fiction in this locale. Fortunately, our editorial staff is well balanced in this respect, for Mr. Hoover, who spent years ranching and punching cattle, and "knows his West," according to correspondents who discuss his tales in the readers' forums of magazines in which he appears, not only writes 'em, but likes a good Western yarn almost as well as he does a book by Sabatini. \* \* \*The frequent emphasis

on Western fiction in the pages of the A. & J. shows how far an editor can submerge his own preferences in the interest of readers. Nothing can blind us to the fact that the cowboy-sheriff yarn is by all odds the most popular form of fiction that is being published today. Readers apparently are insatiable for it. Numerous writers are pulling down thousands of dollars yearly with mediocre stuff, writing for this demand, and the editors howl for more. To those naive young writers who frequently write asking us what type of fiction is most in demand—their practical minds set on turning out just that type, and thereby taking a short cut to fame and fortune—we are wont to reply, sorrowfully but truthfully, "The Western yarn." It is the nearest thing to a "sure-fire" seller that exists in the fictional field. In spite of which, how anybody can write 'em, or how anybody can read 'em for pleasure, remains a mystery to us.

THE ABOVE LINES were written before we unwillingly went to see the photoplay, "The Pony Express." After witnessing this James Cruze masterpiece, we were almost inclined to withdraw the

comment, for in "The Pony Express," more than in any Western that has preceded it, the romance and the glory that surround the old days seem to have been revealed, with a realism that leaves an indelible impression. At least, after viewing "The Pony Express" we can understand better why the story of the old West appeals to so many readers and photoplay audiences.

THIS HAS BEEN "moving month" in the offices of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. The rapid growth of business in the printing department necessitated remodeling and enlargements which practically double the capacity of the plant. The editorial and business offices of the magazine and the Simplified Training Course were moved from the upstairs location at No. 1835 Champa Street, to a more commodious ground floor location at 1839 Champa Street, where friends who may be passing through Denver are invited to visit us. If we have seemed a bit slow in answering our correspondence during the past few weeks, may we be forgiven because of the upset state of affairs incident to the ordeal of moving?

## The Specter

BY E. S. CONNORS

HE wanted to write "literature that would live." Always he had felt the inner urge to express his emotions. A surging wave of love or anger, of remorse or revenge, would sweep his soul. What a wonderful story. But when he sat down to write it, there stood at his elbow the specter of The People Who Will Read This.

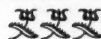
The specter grinned so hideously that the writer's hand began to tremble and he said to himself: "What will they think, the people who read this? Will they suspect that I am describing my own ambitions? Will they realize that these are my inner weaknesses? I must disguise this feeling; I must cover this emotion. I must conceal Myself from the eyes of the people who will read this."

When he had completed his task his work lay before him cold, lifeless, inert. It was merely the corpse of his once fiery inspiration. A beautifully modeled body it was, but quite dead, killed by the specter of The People Who Will Read This.

And it never came to life because the writer never learned that he who would create must pay the price in travail of soul.

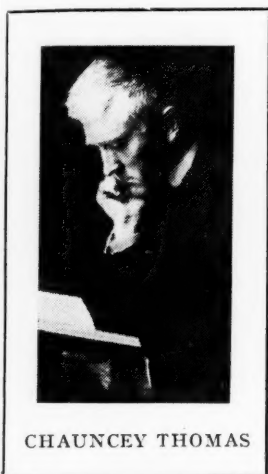
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# Write Because You Must

By CHAUNCEY THOMAS



CHAUNCEY THOMAS

"STYLE is the Man Himself" say the French, and none say it better. The Style is the Story, for the Story is the Man Himself. Let us for the moment get away from gobbling by the month. Why do we read? I for one read not wantonly and by accident, nor because I am told to or enticed, but by

authors or by subjects. Hence I subscribe for no magazine, I object to the American plan of being fed, either grub or thought. "Eat this, read this" is the boarding-house system in each case, and leads to indigestion. Range. Hence the newsstand habit.

"The Story is the Man Himself?" Yes. For all there is to the story is fixing the writer's personality on the subconscious mind of the reader. Attract his attention—that is but a minor detail, of which more later—see that he cannot forget you. Cannot. I know a college president who got up in the night and burned Jack London's "Love of Life." Then he slept. That is writing.

Attracting instant attention, quick recognition of merit, that is well enough for pot-boilers, for gobblers of dime extractors, reading and advertising alike. Fame comes slow. The tinpan opening attracts attention, sells the magazine. Shakespeare, waiting one generation for publication, two generations for timid recognition, fixed the tongue of his race. This is true, the quicker the recognition the less lasting the fame. Omar waiting forty years for a reader with a pen.

Fitzgerald died the only man in the world knowing what he had done. If you would eat make your story of dough, if you would live make it of stone. Name me one writer who blazed to full flame in his own life who lived after. If you would write for money you must write for now, if you would write for eternity you must write for the future; the two are not in one bottle nor on one ribbon.

In one winter twenty years ago, I read one hundred and five books concerning the short-story. For six weeks I spent all day long examining English grammars, to learn that there is no such book because it is impossible. Then a hundred or two books on the philosophy of language, the like and difference of English, German, Arabic, Chinese, Latin, click of Hottentot, hand talk, and signaling. Writing, I came to know, is only signaling; the eye takes the sign, shape and color; reading is but trailing tracks in the snow or charcoal prints on the wood called paper. The Australian Bushman, just above the monkey, the greatest two-foot trailer on earth, taught me something about molding the mind of my reader as I would have it. The Bushman followed marks, the reader followed marks, both alike, and what made plain or hidden trail to the one did so to the other. I read three thousand books.

Thus I learned something, but only a little did I learn, and only a little do I know now, of the how and the why. Then to do it. To lay the open trail, the deceptive trail, the hidden trail, my reader following like a hound because he must. Because he arose from his bed and burned the Love of Life.

ALL the books taught me was how to edit. None taught me a word of how to write. Get it down, then edit it, but not too much; get it down while the pictures come tumbling



faster than a dozen fingers can mark their trails.

Jumbled, snatchy, catch this, listen, faintly far-off, that? Get down what you can while you can. Then later sort, drop, put in, and when the thing is done, write the beginning. Build the house, then the door. Worry not over how to begin, about the gate, put it down while it comes, then sleep.

But between the swirling cannons and the whisperings in the air with their blazing pictures and ghosts like half-guessed perfume, there were words. And the meaning of a word is not in the tongue that says it but in the ear that hears it.

To get the words? The dictionary was useless except to spell. I read Shakespeare through alone and aloud. Then the Bible. All aloud. Why? Silent reading stretched only the intake of the mind, reading aloud exercised and subtly skilled the verbal reproductive chambers of the mind, and as Gray and Keats balanced Omar and Hamlet, from it all came the play of words. How many I do not know, nor care, for many simply taught the use and need of few; a thousand well mixed will do nine-tenths of all good writing that comes out of you or of me.

By thumbing the dictionary, mindful of the philosophy of tongues, knowing that the word-book is swollen with several languages loosely connected, and counting the unknown words, I estimate perhaps thirty thousand, from a hazy nodding acquaintance to a half-mastery over only the few hundred wanted. But they were sifting grains of gold from piles of dust, and a clutter of awkward but necessary rubbish.

**I**F you would write, read. Read aloud. never copy, that deadly evil; so swing from that woman-chaser's political poison, the greatest speech ever written, over the carcass of a wop, to the jingle of Mother Goose; from Shakespeare and the Bible, alone and aloud, each word relished, to the children's bedtime rhymes, for one is the birth tongue of the race and the other the seed of the reader's ear vocabulary, each and both interlaced with the others, and all traced on back of the inner skull, and that is the writer's sounding board. Those childhood sounds are the black and white notes you play and touch, whereby to awake haunting

memories with which you tangle your own tale, and it becomes part of them. Then in the night of hungered sleep the reader rises from bed and burns or reads it once again because he must or he cannot sleep. Then you have written.

And the signs are words, and never yet was a masterpiece put together like a machine, calculated and charted, but as grows the summer dream or comes the nightmare. We can guess but never know how, any more than why. Never write unless you must. And when you must rise in the night and write, for *It* will not let you sleep, then another must rise from his dawning bed and burn it or love it, for *It* will not let him sleep. That is writing, but it is not food. There is but one critic, Time. No mind can judge the goods of its generation. That is the work of the future. So fret not if no one seems to care much now. If good, nothing can hide it; if bad, nothing can save it. There are two kinds of writing; in the mud with the feet, and in the minds of man to come. The Ten Commandments did not sell.

If you want to Write, write you can and will. If you wish to pose, wallow in applause, seek a lazy labor, then you can sell all you do at its full worth, but you will never write a word. Prostitution is not motherhood.

The oldest writing in the world, shadow pictures on the wall, is by gnarled and baby hands perpetually reprinted nightly by tens of millions, just as it was written a million years ago. When the wiggling ears of the rabbit left the wall they were engraved and woven in the childhood memory of the human race; the edition is in trillions. They were not fingered for meat or cavish gossip, but for a shadow, and from those pointed wolf ears and swaying mastodon of the crumple hands are today our stained windows, our smeared webbing, and these quick-rotting charcoal shadows we call print. It is not the act but the wish that makes it good or crime, and if you paint ink for praise or cash, that is your pay. But through the divine gamble of a million, dripping your ink because you cannot hold it—read who will or when—you make yourself immortal though forgotten in the fiber of your race.

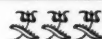
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## Please Revise

BY RALPH R. PERRY

*Assistant Editor, The Frontier*



RALPH R. PERRY

IN A shocking percentage of cases the story you revise in accordance with an editor's recommendations does not sell on its second submission to him. Even if you are selling the magazine regularly, and the changes desired seem few and slight, the probability is that you will have your labor for your pains, with the net result that you are disgruntled

and wonder whether the editor really knows what he does want, anyway; while he accuses you of hasty and careless work. Surely he made what he wanted clear enough!

Because the chances of success are so slim and the possibilities of hurting your feelings so great, many magazines never request revisions. But this, it seems to me, is an avoidance of the greatest service an editor can give. As Walter Hines Page declared\* a writer is handicapped because he must work alone, and cannot obtain the enthusiasm or the benefit of the constant flow of constructive criticism found in the teamwork painters and musicians enjoy. Working alone, your own preoccupations often blind you to blunders in the construction of a story obvious as soon as an editor points them out. It is very difficult for you to separate the finished draft of a story from the ideas which have gone to its creation, only a small portion

of which are on the paper. How often have we all made a minor character inconsistent because we wanted a certain speech or act to show the character of the hero. How often do we use technical terms incomprehensible to the general reader because we are so familiar with our material that terms other than technical ones seem awkward and vague. I believe that when an editor says, "This is not clear," "That is unconvincing," "Here you give an impression you did not intend to convey," he is right nine times in ten.

A request for revision, then, which does not involve the plot or characters, may be executed by following the editor's instructions literally and without considering the entire story. I revised a story not long ago because the maneuver of checking a large steamship alongside a dock by means of her hawsers alone was not clearly related. In another instance, a first-rate Western story was developed very definitely in a place and a time about which we had just published a long fact-article, and the hero was obviously drawn from a famous Western character appearing therein. We asked that the direct allusions be removed, which was easily done. I believe that most successful revisions are alterations of details such as this. The editor likes your story, but objects to some of the facts, or possibly, to its length. He is asking you for nothing more than an editing of your manuscript. It may be more extensive than his staff has the information or the time to do, but he is not asking you to approach your manuscript as an artist.

**B**UT the instant you are asked to change a character, to delete a scene, or rearrange the climax of a story, a different situation has arisen.

\*A Publisher's Confession, p. 53.

Stories are bought because an editor finds them entertaining. Important as plot and character and story construction may be, they are secondary to the emotional effect of the story as a whole. Some editors may be pleased most by sound and logical plot, others by sustained narrative and a reality of detail, but, to paraphrase my friend Bittner, the general effect is the thing; and you can no more revise or tinker that than you can an egg. An egg is fresh enough to eat—or it isn't. The decision is one for individual taste, granted; but whatever an editor may say, however much he may minimize the importance of the change he wants made, the most pertinent part of his criticism is that he sent the story back. The inescapable fact is that it didn't please him. He thinks, and hopes, that certain changes will capture that desirable effect—but the concoction of stories is not his job. He is a critic, and when he acts as a creative artist he may recommend the wrong change, or fail to see that a much more thoroughgoing revision than he has requested is necessary to give the story that all-important pleasing emotional effect.

It is often said that resubmitted stories fail because they have no surprise and freshness for the editor, but though a story is never as effective on the second reading as the first, I think this is compensated for by the fact that by asking for a revision the editor has placed himself under some obligation to buy the story if he possibly can. The high percentage of failure comes from the fact that writers take an editor's letter as gospel, and give the story a mechanical revision instead of working over the material anew, as they would if they were building a new story.

Therefore, when you are asked to revise a story I think that instead of giving the yarn a hasty editing to get it out of the way so that you can get back to the story you happen to be working on at the moment—which interests you far more than this old finished yarn, the material for which is half forgotten and for which your enthusiasm has vanished—you should tuck the manuscript in a drawer, drop the key out of the window, and reflect as follows:

1. This story isn't quite up to my standard, or it wouldn't have been sent back.
2. Cutting alone won't save it. The edi-

tor could cut; he sent it back because he wanted something added.

3. They want to buy it, or they wouldn't have asked me to revise. They mean well and are trying to help me, but

- (a) Do they really mean what they say?
- (b) If I change that incident or character, what is the effect going to be on every other character and incident in the story? Will it be enough to rewrite a paragraph, or must I rewrite the whole yarn, and if so is it worth while?
- (c) Are they asking me to cut local color and description which really give the story its charm, so that if I do the result will be wooden?

4. Anyhow I'm a writer. I may have slipped, but I know more about that yarn than any editor extant. Darned if I'll tinker! I'll lay a new egg!

**SUPPOSE** we give a few examples of this train of thought in action.

I had a story back with the explanation that it was too "slight" to purchase. Slight, to me, means insufficient incident or a climax without any deep and permanent effect on the characters involved, and this story was only five thousand words in length and contained a rescue at sea, a fight, a strong temptation to murder a skipper and wreck a ship, ending with a man's conquest of an intense hatred and an expression of a virtue that I think is fundamental among good sailormen. Well, I didn't think such a yarn was slight, but such was its emotional effect on the editor. He had used the wrong word of criticism: what was he driving at?

I discovered, first, that I hadn't stated the theme explicitly. To my mind the story did say something about life, but he had missed it. It escaped him because the title was poorly chosen and the hero's nickname gave an utterly wrong impression of his character. Moreover, by re-reading the story after it was cold, I found I had changed my mind about the hero half way through the yarn, and the story began to build up its emotional effect on page seven instead of page one. As it happened, a very little re-writing made the story sell on its second trip, to another magazine; for when an editor once gets an idea a story is slight he'll very, very seldom buy



it. But I thank editor number one for giving me the chance to improve that yarn five hundred per cent.

Referring to the way an apparently slight change will require an alteration of an entire story, let me mention a Western novel which had its final scenes in a dance hall. The writer is a real old-timer, whose effects depend upon his realistic treatments, and a dance hall treated realistically — ! We asked him to take the climax out of the dance hall. Now it would have been easy enough for him to move the final shooting to the street outside it, but he saw that to give the novel the outdoors effect he would have to re-write the entire last half of the story. The revised yarn was a new egg, and we found it strictly fresh!

On the other hand, there was a short with a fine action-climax involving the leader of a religious sect. The intolerance and deadly purposefulness of this man were true enough of the fervidly religious 40's, but a story with a sincere religious fanatic for its villain is liable to give offense. The author changed his story into a family drama, but did not rewrite it. In consequence, the second draft contained speeches and incidents that had been convincing for a man who could tell himself he was fighting for the salvation of a person he loved, but which now seemed extreme and insufficiently motivated. Instead of asking that the story be rewritten, I should have asked for an entirely different story with the same final scene. May I make my apology to the author here?

The danger of destroying charm by revision applies to those writers who have a strong reportorial sense and a love of detail for its own sake, but little liking for dramatic plot. Homer Croy spoke for

such in his recent article in *THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST*. Editors will always ask them for more plot, but from what I have seen of the results of such requests, I think they had better fill their ears with wax against the siren call.

Writers who depend upon dramatic incident, however, and who find it easy to concoct plots, had better replot from the beginning when an editor writes that he likes the initial situation of a story but did not find it compelling enough to buy. Here rearrangement of details will not increase the total sum. From editors who make a habit of criticising in detail, such vagueness indicates that you have a good idea, but that they are not satisfied with the characters and events with which it is presented. The fault is in the whole substance of the story, and I think the best thing to do is to try the yarn on three editors; if all agree, tear it up and go back to your notes again!

IN a word, the relationship between author and editor involves far more than that existing between other business men who buy from and sell to one another. They are friends working together to improve the quality of the writer's work, to the end that he and the magazine shall both become more prosperous. The editor buys, but he criticizes as a friend; and I do not think the writer should revise merely to give the buyer what he wants. His buying friend should be treated as any other well-informed critic, and "please revise" letters should be approached in the spirit Lord Bacon advised:

*"Read not to contradict and confute;  
nor to believe and take for granted;  
but to weigh and consider."*

## Heartbreaks

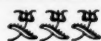
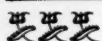
By MARY CAROLYN DAVIES

GIVE — and take

Hearts beat to break.

Heartbreaks do not last long

And — if they give one song — ?



## Essentials of Plot and Climax

BY WILLARD E. HAWKINS

*(This series began in the October, 1925, issue.)*

**I**N A PLOT SENSE, the whole of a short-story is the climax. A concise and practical definition of plot may be thus expressed: "A plot consists of a problem and its solution." If a tale cannot be reduced to this formula, it is a simple narrative, rather than a short-story. The phrase constitutes not only a definition, but a recipe for the planning of fiction. Properly understood it reduces the writing of stories to a matter of stating a problem, then solving it in a way that is logical but not obvious.

It will be conceded that the easiest part of this formula to carry out is the first. Problems confront us at every turn; the difficulty is to solve them effectively.

A simple illustration will make clearer the application of the principle. Suppose, for example, that we contrive a situation in which a boy hero is trapped inside of a cave by getting his foot caught in a rock crevice, which holds him prisoner while the tide slowly rises over his head. There we have a problem: How is the boy's life to be saved? The answer presents many difficulties. We might allow him to work his foot loose—but that would be obvious. We might let the tide fail to reach its usual height—but that would not be logical. A writer of boys' stories solved this problem by causing the hero to put the bulb of his camera in his mouth while holding the open end of the rubber tube above the surface of the water. By means of this improvised diving apparatus, he was able to sustain life until rescue came. The result was an entertaining boys' story, because the solution of the problem was logical, yet not obvious. The average reader would not have anticipated it.

The relative importance of the two elements of plot would be better indicated if we phrased our definition, "Plot is the so-

lution of a problem"; for the solution is the all-important thing. When an editor returns your story with the comment, "A well-written tale, but rather hackneyed," he probably means not that the problem is hackneyed, because that is rather immaterial, but that you have solved the problem in a familiar way; the reader knows the answer before it is given. The best possible plot material is a new device for solving a problem. Have your climax—the solution—to start with, then devise a problem to fit it.

In writing the story of the boy trapped by the rising tide the author, in all probability, followed the plan of working back from the climax. Perhaps he had noted a similarity between a camera tube and a diving apparatus. This would lead to the invention of an emergency in which the tube could be used for just such a purpose. The introductory part would be reached the last thing before actual development began. The boy's possession of the camera must be accounted for by giving him an interest in photography, and his pursuit of that art must bring him into the position of danger from which his presence of mind finally rescues him.

The plot, thus worked out backward from solution to problem, comes to the reader problem first. The result is a logically developed story, with an unexpected twist at the climax.

In testing a plot idea, consider chiefly the possibilities for a striking climax. It is characteristic of almost every germinal idea that it may be used either for the opening situation—the problem—or for the situation. By all means, however, let it serve as the climax.

Perhaps you have received a manuscript back with the editorial comment: "A good idea, but you have failed to make the most

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of it." Examine the story and see whether the criticism was not due to the fact that you employed your basic idea for the problem, rather than for the solution. Try an inversion of the plot elements to bring your strong point out at the conclusion. In a great many cases, this is just what is needed to make the most of the story's possibilities. The "big idea," whatever it may be, is the feature that belongs in the solution of your problem. If you have devised a novel method of escape from a burglar-proof bank vault, by all means let that be the culmination of your action. If you have thought of an unique relation of characters toward each other, the chances are very much in favor of a story which makes this relation the climax, rather than the opening situation.

The student cannot undertake a more efficient exercise for developing his plot sense than that of studying, from this viewpoint, published stories in all sorts of magazines. Dissect the narrative until you have the problem and the solution clearly in mind, then endeavor to follow the train of reasoning which caused the writer to develop his story as he did, rather than in some other manner. Note how, in most cases, the crux of the story is contained in the climax, and also how this climax idea might have been employed as the problem, rather than its solution, had not the author possessed the judgment to discern that, so employed, it would have failed to leave a strong final impression.

**SURPRISE** is one of the essential elements of plot effectiveness. It is more often than any other the factor that "puts a story across." A tale may contain a worth-while problem and a solution that is logical but not obvious, yet still it may lack that sudden, irresistible culmination of events at the climax which makes for "punch."

For example, suppose that the solution of the story problem consists in causing the hero to take a course in college. It is possible to devise a situation of which this would be the natural and yet not altogether obvious solution. To originate a rough instance, he might find himself in love with a country girl whose dying father exacted from her a promise not to marry an uneducated man. This promise, we will say, was for the purpose of eliminating the

hero from the race; but he overcomes his handicap by going to college.

Now such a climax, with its necessarily slow development, would be obviously ineffective. By the time the reader has followed the boy through college, the effectiveness of the idea will have evaporated. The action is not sharp and rapid as it should be for dramatic effect.

Many themes are unfitted for short-story development because of this drawback. The short-story culmination should be abrupt—sharply defined. A cloudburst is more dramatic than a drizzle. You experience a more definite shock from the sight of an aviator plunging to his death than from observing a victim of a wasting illness, who is approaching death just as certainly, though more slowly. Suddenness, thus, is an important element of dramatic value. In many cases it may be said to give a story "punch." To have your hero go through college will not, of itself, make a vivid climax, no matter how well it solves the problem involved, because the action lacks this necessary quality.

But it is sometimes possible to employ such a solution by devising other means for a surprise. We might have the hero gradually come to recognize that in solving his problem he has grown beyond the simple country girl he remembers, and that he no longer loves her. Thus another problem would be introduced in the solving of the first one. This second problem could be dramatically solved when they meet again and he discovers that the girl has more than kept pace with his development.

Surprise does not ordinarily improve the literary flavor of a yarn, but there are surprises of style or atmosphere. Here, however, we are chiefly concerned with plot-surprise. Without an effective surprise of some kind, it may be said, few pieces of fiction find a market. The more striking the surprise, the more likely a sale—though, naturally, the quality of the market is dependent on literary value and other considerations. Sometimes surprise may be given by letting the climax contain an unexpected revelation concerning the *motives* of characters. So far as possible, let the suddenness of your climax provide the surprise element. The solution should come at the moment when the action seems farthest from a satisfactory outcome. When our college graduate comes home to break his



engagement with the simple country girl is the time for him to make the discovery of her dazzling development during his absence.

Preparation for the climax is a delicate phase of story construction—or rather narration, since it is not until the story is being actually written that the difficulties become apparent. How often is the author in despair over a good idea that flattens because, in order to convey its meaning to the reader, the conclusion must be cumbered with explanations, description, and sidelights on character.

The less of these features, character drawing included, we have in our climax, the better rounded it will be. The place for the drawing of characters is in the preliminary narration. By the time we reach the climax our reader should know the story people so well that it is unnecessary to tell *how* they did or said a thing. Similarly, the reader should have such a clear picture of the setting at that point that no description is needed. The key to all the action should be given in advance, so that no explanations are necessary.

In the introduction, and in fact all through the narration preceding the climax, characterization and atmosphere may be given in such doses as the action will permit. Remember that we are building for the climax. We must impress upon the

reader in the first part that the heroine has red-brown hair and speaks with a soft Southern drawl, in order that these details need not be mentioned at the last. Thus, at the crucial moment, a simple statement of what she did will be sufficient to make the reader picture her as doing it characteristically. When we quote what she says at the conclusion, the reader should be prepared to supply instinctively the tone in which the words are uttered.

From the foregoing discussion, a few simple rules for obtaining strength and balance in story structure may be deduced:

1. Plot consists of a problem and its solution.

2. The solution of the problem is the climax; and the climax, in a plot sense, is the story.

3. The three essentials of an effective climax are: It must be logical; it must not be obvious; it must have a sudden, surprising culmination, for the sake of dramatic effect.

4. The germinal idea of the story, usually, should form the basis of the solution, or climax, rather than of the problem.

5. We are not ready for the climax until the characters have been brought to life in the reader's mind so that concise statements are all this reader needs in order to visualize the big scene.



## Ventilated Villains

BY TALBOT SHORT

**A** CERTAIN adventure story of "complete novel" proportions—60,000 words—came to me for third editorial reading. It was the first lengthy script sent our way by a man who had sold us three shorts, a writer who, though somewhat amateurish in regard to detail, nevertheless possessed an admirable instinct for plot and action.

This particular yarn was a cow-country Western. It was done on a grand scale, presenting the rather breath-taking total of

45 chief and assistant heroes and 200 (count 'em!) forthright villains. No deadwood, either!

Action? In each of 26 chapters at least two six-guns barked. I became rather interested in certain statistics connected with the tale; and I found that—not counting two fusillades and one general shoot-up impossible to estimate—exactly 29 rifle shots and 161 revolver cartridges were fired. The weapons used were Sharps, Henry and Winchester rifles; Colt, Remington and

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Smith & Wesson six-guns. Probably they all were ruined, since not a single one of the marksmen ever took time to clean and oil his irons. . . .

The author's sheer delight in rip-snorting action was plainly manifest on every page of the tale. That was the main reason it received serious consideration—for, considered from an artistic standpoint, it was something of a burlesque upon conventional Western stuff. Unintentional, of course.

I read chapter one. Right off the bat, and before he even knew that his life was in danger, the hard-ridin' kid from Arizony was shot—through the Stetson. Of course it wouldn't have done to kill him off at that moment, else the novel atrophy instanter into an obituary notice.

I grimaced a little at the perforated Stetson, but plunged on. (I'd done the same thing myself more than once.) Almost every author has to be spotted a little something, it seems.

In chapter four an assistant hero got it—in the same convenient place! To brief a long tale of mayhem and murder, no less than four Stetsons were shot away from the heads of heroes; and the rest of the indomitable band bore nonmortal wounds galore. It really became odd how infallibly the desperadoes punctured the peripheries.

On the other hand the heroes themselves proved extremely finicky in their shooting. Three times did "a blue-red star appear in the exact center of his (a villain's) forehead . . . !"

**THIS** gave me an inspiration. Having on hand a lot of old heading drawings in black and white, I cut out the stodgy, gorilla figure of a gunfighting villain, and also the tall, parsnip-shaped silhouette of the regulation hero. Seizing a common pin as my representative of a bullet, I went through the script a second time. Each time a bullet found its mark, I ventilated the hero or villain in a cardboard spot anatomically to correspond.

The results should prove instructive—one way or another. They were:

## HERO

1. Stetson gone, torn to shreds of felt. (Note: There must have been as many mad hatters as cowpunchers, in those days.)

2. Creased so many times in the scalp he is bald.

3. Fleshy parts of upper arms and thighs completely shot away, leaving only nerves, important blood-vessels and bones intact.

4. One ear lobe missing.

5. Otherwise unwounded.

## VILLAIN

1. Stetson unmarked.

2. Gaping hole between the eyes, large enough so that rooks could nest.

3. Jugular vein punctured.

4. Seven bubbling holes in the lungs.

5. Three shots through the abdomen.

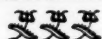
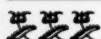
6. Two broken necks (necktie party).

7. Two fingers shot off gun hand.

**O**BVIOUSLY, as Cabell would say, the villains were treated justly. And likewise was the story. . . .

The occasion for this note is the appearance of the complete novel in the pages of a contemporary. Truly interested, I read the story through a third time. Somewhere or other it had become vastly improved, probably by a collaboration between the author and that other set of editors. I am glad for the writer, as he has the power in his elbow to break out success of a distinctive sort if only the fingers in front of that elbow learn to avoid the trite and the ludicrous.

And in closing, an apology. Taking refuge behind a pseudonym isn't what would have been done by Two-Gun Grafton, yet it seems necessary. With something like a million words of published Westerns of mine own, I'd spend the rest of my natural life admitting or refuting criticisms fully as just as those I've been hurling. So let me say that contributors need not fear that I am dyspeptic often. In the future they may count upon finding me just as Talbot not as Short.



## Driving the Idea Home

By ARTHUR HAWTHORNE CARHART



ARTHUR H. CARHART

ANYONE who has written much knows that for the most part he writes to a great, silent, critical giant that rarely gives voice in approval or disapproval. Generally when the reading public does bestir itself "to write the editor, by gum," it is in criticism. Only occasionally do we who mold

words into paragraphs and paragraphs into articles or stories, receive any handclapping except from our friends; and then one must be skeptical, for their cheering may be from pure friendliness and loyalty.

Why no one has ever taken me to task before on one particular point will perhaps remain unanswered. But a scientist recently wrote me after reading one of my articles on wild flower gardening and intimated that about all I had in the whole article was one idea and most of the article was repetition of that theme.

I immediately marked that article up as a pretty well organized bit of non-fiction and my critic as a fairly analytical reader. For experience has convinced me that if you start out with one basic theme in an article and get that over, fully, conclusively, you have "rung the bell" both with editor and with reader. I speak of an article of around fifteen hundred to three thousand words, which length is universally more acceptable than anything of greater length.

Repetition is at once the most powerful and the most monotonous force in composition. In previous articles I have illustrated

my points by reference to other art. Let us turn to something other than building ideas with words for an illustration of the uses of repetition.

Whistle the first four bars of "Home Sweet Home" or ditto of the "Humoresque." The theme of the composition is stated there. Now hop along in the composition that you have started to pipe with your lips puckered and notice that the next four bars seem to answer the question that is stated in the first four. Next start the ninth bar. You're whistling exactly the same notes that you started with!

Repetition! Nothing more powerful in composition than repetition.

**P**ICTURE a fire-lit night, a circle of swaying bodies, the throbbing cadence of a tom-tom and the monotonous rising and falling of some Indian tribe. You are interested at first. Then you momentarily get "fed up" on the repeated song, but pretty soon it "gets" you again and from then on you are enthralled by the pyramiding structure of repetition. In the case of the savage it builds to a point where he is in a frenzy.

In landscape plans designers consciously start out to produce repetition of theme. Take, for example, the effect of a long avenue lined with the powerful vertical lines of poplars. Up-and-down line is followed by up-and-down line until there is built a strength in the view which can be obtained by no other scheme of theme.

Knowing that repetition of theme is so powerful, we writers would be foolish not to avail ourselves of it. We use contrast perhaps more than repetition. This is particularly true of fiction. But repetition, if so handled as not to produce monotony, is as forceful as stark contrast.

In article writing, state your theme early.



Then start out to repeat it as definitely as the composer of the "Humoresque" repeated that theme. True, you cannot use the same words to re-state the theme, for, if you did, monotony would result. The difference between the more highly organized musical composition and that of the aborigine is found in the manner in which the theme is restated. The savage lets forth his song, sounds a simple succession of notes, finds them interesting, and because he cannot go further in development of theme through modified repetition, repeats exactly the same tones. Primitive story-telling often started with one bare fact and never got beyond the simple statement.

In building the musical composition, the composer restates a theme by using different orchestral instruments, different tone coloring in the harmony, and by stepping the theme up a third or a fifth in the scale or even modulating it into another key altogether. In order not to produce monotony the writer must use somewhat the same methods. He must restate the theme but he must not let it be evident.

Using different words is the right method of repetition of theme without duplicating it in all detail. For example: you start an article with some such statement as: "The Western Yellow Pine is a near relative to the Northern Norway Pine." To restate that theme of tree-family relationships you might come back with this: "In fact, these two trees might be considered blood brothers if they were found growing together on some sunny slope of our Western hills." Again you want to restate similarity between the trees so you put down: "Their needles are borne in bundles of three, the cones are of about the same size, the twigs have the same habit of growth and the old bark on trunks of mature trees is similar." Some new ideas each time but the main idea, similarity of the two pines, remains the same.

**R**EPETITION may be brought about by using illustration. Put in a little story, or take perhaps a paragraph to elaborate by example a statement which you made earlier in one short, jabbing sentence.

You can use inference, too, to produce the result which you are after. Starting with such a sentence as "Careless smokers annually produce many forest fires," you might get clear away from direct statement almost

immediately and give a little story of something that happened on the Yampa Forest of Western Colorado, centering around a camper, a vicious bit of fire in a cigarette butt and a forest ranger that hauled that fellow up and saw to it that he got soaked a good fine. Now, you may have back of all this article the idea of getting over the theme of being careful with fire in the forests. You may never come out baldly and just write: "Be careful with fire in the forests," but all through the writing you infer that if one is not careful something direful will occur.

In fact, there are so many ways in which you can hammer away on one idea without getting monotonous that it would seem unnecessary to give a catalog of methods. About all I care to put over in this article is concentrated in two closely associated statements which I might have given very early in few words but you would never have taken with you when you turned your attention from those bald sentences.

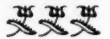
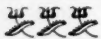
The first is: Usually you can put over not more than a single main idea in one ordinary magazine article written in popular style.

The second is: In order to put over this one idea you must repeat the major theme of your article over and over again, always in such a manner that while hammering it home you will not produce monotony.

Study the possibilities of adroit repetition. Some analytical mind will pick you up some day as I have been "called" in a friendly manner by my scientist correspondent. But the vast majority of your readers will "get the idea" far better than they would if you compiled a veritable army of facts and simmered them down to an article.

To give a long list of "don'ts" about repeating yourself would be a fine example of monotonous repetition. It would very ably present the converse side of this article. I have no ambition to slip into a pitfall of my own digging.

There is one very important admonition to give to the writer who definitely sets out to produce results by repetition. That is to remember always that in his repeating he is not to reuse words, phrases or other details but must restate the *theme*. That is what is done in good music and the best music never becomes monotonous.



## “Kidding Yourself Along”

By FRANK H. WILLIAMS

**A**N important attribute for achieving success in any line is enthusiasm.

The writer who is enthusiastic about his work will inevitably forge ahead more rapidly than the writer who is doubtful about the worth-whileness of it all, and is half inclined to give it up.

It is important, therefore, always to keep up your enthusiasm at as high a pitch as possible. But, in the natural course of events, blue days come and other days arrive when to loaf seems a lot more inviting than to work. In time the fine edge of enthusiasm is worn off.

How, then, once enthusiasm has diminished, can the writer get back what he has lost?

Perhaps the results of an experience in free-lance writing extending over a period of six years in which there have been times of enthusiasm and times of dislike for the job, but during which this matter of keeping up enthusiasm has been persistently cultivated, will prove of interest to other writers.

These methods are very helpful in renewing enthusiasm:

### *1st—Get a New Viewpoint.*

It is natural for the majority of writers to pen stories directly or indirectly involving their own thoughts and personal experiences. Frequently such experiences and thoughts are none too cheerful, so these manuscripts have a dismal, drab hue, and the writer, having no particular enthusiasm about the life he has led, loses enthusiasm for the work he is turning out. So a different viewpoint helps to make writing more of a delight. This different viewpoint can be secured by getting away from work for a while, meeting new people and seeing new things. How many people that you never knew before have you become acquainted

with in the past two months, six months, or a year? Not very many, probably. And yet how it would lift you out of yourself and give you a new slant on life to meet a lot of new folks and get their opinions and ideas.

Again, instead of looking at your plots from your own personal viewpoint, step outside of yourself and look at them from the viewpoint of the happiest person you ever knew, or the greatest adventurer you ever knew, or the gloomiest person you ever knew. Such viewpoints are bound to give you new thoughts, new angles and new ideas which it will be a pleasure to get down in black and white.

### *2d—Take a Negative Look at Your Work.*

Look at writing in this way:

The real back-of-the-behind reason why so many people write is that they have an uncontrollable desire to create. In some this desire takes the form of constructing beautiful buildings, in others of building enormous businesses, and in others of adventuring on the high seas, discovering new lands and creating colonies and empires.

Realizing that you want to create things, that you've got to create in order to be satisfied, tell yourself that you are through creating. You are completely finished so far as ever originating anything new goes. From now on you're not going to put out anything original from your brain—you're simply going to live on the surface, think the thoughts that other people think, and let those who will be the creators.

Could you stand such a condition of affairs? Could you ever be even moderately contented with all creative desires atrophied and dead?

Think this proposition over carefully. Turn it over in your mind. Perhaps, stop working for a while and see just how it

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seems to be cut off from all expression of the things you create. You'll probably be astonished at the way you react. You'll find that you simply couldn't stand such a thing as being cut off from the joy of creating, and you'll rush back to your work glad of the opportunity it gives you of being a creator, regardless of whether it is yet bringing in money.

### 3d—Do a Little Crowing.

You're human. You do feel, every now and then, that you'd like the world to know how good you are, don't you?

A good way, then, of increasing your enthusiasm for the writing game is by searching out the things in which you are making progress and then crowing to yourself about your success.

Are you able to write better now than you could a year ago?

Are your plots snappier and more interesting now than formerly?

Is your characterization better?

Have you sold stuff to a new market which you were unable to land before?

Have you received a prized word of encouragement from an editor which shows interest in your work?

You are making progress, there's no doubt about it. So review your work with such questions as the above in mind and brag about it to yourself, or even to your family and friends if you feel so inclined.

You may be surprised at how this simple little stunt will pep you up. You'll be delighted to discover how many things you really have to brag about—what good progress you are really making in this difficult job of bringing home the shekels for the things you've written.



## Tell Your Story Three Times

"TELL your story three times," says Editor Stokes of *Bus Transportation*, New York, and thereby he outlines a new idea in writing for the trade press. It's a corking good idea, too. Here's his slant on it:

"Tell your story three times and you will be hitting us dead right and I believe hitting other trade papers, too," says Editor Stokes. "In the first place write your story and tell your story in that. Then put on a snappy head with subheads running through the story, breaking it up,

### 4th—Tackle a Different Angle of Writing.

Have you been hammering away at detective stories for quite a long time? If so, change the scene and try a love story.

Or, if you have been writing nothing but fiction, try your hand at a business article for a trade paper, or a bit of humor for *Life* or *Judge* or the "Short Turns" department of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Or try some editorials for *Collier's Weekly* on the burning topics which form your main line of argument in conversation.

Something new to write about is always a tonic for lagging enthusiasm. Of course, the best way to get something new to write about is by traveling around and seeing new scenes; but not all of us are fortunate enough to be able to travel. So the next best thing is to get these new matters to write about by tackling a different line of writing.

### 5th—Do a Little Speculating on Fame, Freedom, and Fortune.

Think of the money that many big writers make.

Think of the freedom—the ability to go and come when you desire, the ability to get away from clock-punching and dreaded everyday monotony.

Think of the fame that will be yours if you hit it off right.

And, remember, the only way you can ever expect to hit it off in this big manner is by turning out stuff that is superexcellent, altogether wonderful. Unless you produce the very best that is in you, you can never have anything to offer for sale at big money.

So, back to the writing game—pepped up, energetic, with renewed punch and enthusiasm!

so that, when read one after the other, they, too, will tell the story. Then, as a third and final telling of the story, send in enough pictures to tell the story, each with enough of a caption to carry the picture.

"By doing that you will be hitting on high. The picture reader will get the yarn from the illustrations. The head reader will get the story from the heads, and those who have time really to read a trade paper will get the tale from the story itself. By all means tell the story three times."

Russell Raymond Voorhees.

# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST'S LITERARY MARKET TIPS GATHERED MONTHLY FROM AUTHORITATIVE SOURCES

*Fiction House, Inc.*, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, states that it sent checks to ninety-eight different authors in November. *Lariat Story Magazine* wants roping and riding records for its new department, Rodeo Records. *Love Romances* desires strong dramatic love stories of the stage, 5000 to 7000 words. *North-West Stories* cautions writers against the "nondescript" story of 7000 to 9000 words that appears to the editors to be neither short-story nor novelet. Short-stories should be kept under 6000 words. *Lariat Story Magazine* will not need serials for two months to come.

*The Farm Journal*, Washington Square, Philadelphia, Arthur H. Jenkins, informs a contributor: "Don't bother to send any technical or semi-technical farm stuff. We are swamped with it. I want creative stuff, not fiction, and 5 cents a word is not a high price to pay for it. The five-cent rate applies to anything strictly first grade. One of the vital essentials is that it shall be well adapted to the rural reader; the stuff printed by newspapers for city consumption will never pass this test."

*Haldeman-Julius Monthly*, Girard, Kansas, Lloyd E. Smith, assistant editor, writes: "*Haldeman-Julius Monthly* is a definite market for manuscripts of 3000 words or under dealing with all the phases of sham, bunk and hypocrisy, which occur in modern life. These should be written from the angle of the debunker. We like to lay particular stress on individuals, that is, giving character sketches of persons who are preaching any kind of bunk, from evangelism to the sale of patent medicines. We do not use stories, verse, jokes, plays, reviews, or anything except strictly debunking articles. Our policy is very wide and liberal—we will print articles that tell the truth no matter upon whose toes they may tread. I suggest that you list us as paying good rates on acceptance. We pay from 1 cent up per word as a general rule and we have paid as high as 5 cents per word for desirable material. I suggest the good rates listing, however, because we receive a few contributions from somewhat illiterate readers which require a great deal of editing and for which we pay somewhat less than the 1 cent rate. On the average, though, we pay good rates, and always on the acceptance of a manuscript."

*The Frontier*, Garden City, N. Y., does not use serials, but it does use novels complete in one issue.

*The Poet & Philosopher Magazine*, 20-22 W. Forty-Third Street, New York, has resumed publication. This magazine uses lyric, epic and dramatic poems and "poetry with sound philosophy."

*Laughter*, published by the Guild Publishing Company, 584 Drexel Building, Philadelphia, announces: "We are continually in the market for good humor in the form of jokes, verse, epigrams, drawings and fiction. Particularly do we desire good humorous fiction of any length up to 4000 words. Clever satire, or burlesque up to 1000 words is another class of material which we would like to see. We have been forced to make hundreds of rejections on account of badly written and badly conceived material. We endeavor to give prompt report on all contributions but at times it requires three weeks, although this does not occur frequently, one week being the usual time. Payments are made approximately the first and fifteenth of each month. Rates for fiction vary from 2/3 of a cent a word up; verse, 25 cents per line; jokes, 50 cents each and epigrams 35 cents each."

*McClure's Magazine*, 250 Park Avenue, New York, has been purchased by William Randolph Hearst. S. S. McClure, former editor, has gone on a European tour.

*Ainslee's Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, one the Street & Smith group, has recently become a reprint magazine and announces that it is buying nothing new.

*Radio Age*, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, F. A. Hill, associate editor, writes in response to an inquiry concerning unreturned manuscripts: "When the undersigned took over this desk during October, upon the departure of Mr. Hopkins, he very carefully went over every manuscript then on hand and the material not available was returned to the authors. In the future this department will give immediate decision on all manuscripts submitted so there will be no possibility of a misunderstanding on the part of writers."

*The University of North Carolina Press*, Chapel Hill, N. C., publishes about twelve volumes of non-fiction yearly for adults along scientific lines. Payment varies with the book, royalties being paid on some while others are published by special arrangement.

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*The Writers Publishing Company, Inc.*, 9 W. Sixty-fourth Street, New York, is a house for a small group of authors who desire to control their own works, and who own complete copyright, together with books, plates, etc., defray the entire expense of manufacturing and selling, and pay a small commission on sales. L. J. de Bekker, president, writes: "This method of publication cannot be extended at present. It is a prerequisite that there shall be a degree of confidence between the authors and corporation which is rare in the book trades, and that the authors shall possess some working capital which they are willing to invest. We have enough work ahead to keep us occupied on these lines six months, and do not wish to establish new relations. We believe with Anatole France that there are no bad books, and we hate to turn down a good one. So we don't want manuscripts now. But it is more than probable that we shall be ready next year to consider new books for publication on royalty. We strongly dissuade authors from considering any proposition from any house which requires him to defray part or all of the expenses. The author who signs away any right without fair compensation is an ass. Some of us have been that kind of ass, and even now can't look at a thistle without wagging our ears."

*Plumbing and Heating Jobbers' Salesman*, 239 W. Thirtieth Street, New York, has changed its name to *Plumbing and Heating Supply Salesman*. The editors write: "We are looking for fast-moving fiction of 3000 words or less, for which payment will be made at 1 cent a word or better upon acceptance. The hero must be a salesman of plumbing and heating supplies but don't let that scare you. We don't want a strictly 'business' atmosphere, because we are printing fiction as a relief from the 'How to Sell' type of practical article. As long as the locale is in the United States and the main character a salesman of plumbing and heating supplies, we can probably do sufficient editorial tinkering with a yarn to make it fit our columns. Love interest, if any, must be throttled down to the minimum. The shorter the yarn is the better we'll like it. No type of he-man story is barred: the weird, the mystery, the rapid-action yarn full of two-fisted stuff—all of these will be given careful consideration. We want the best fiction we can get of our own particular type and are willing to pay good rates for it. We have tried to be explicit, so please don't dump a trunkful of rejected manuscripts upon us. Make an intelligent effort to send us what we want and you'll find us pretty good fellows to deal with."

*Triple-X Magazine*, Robbinsdale, Minn., is in the market for short-stories up to 8000 words of an outdoor flavor, Western, railroad, sea, north woods, and sport subjects. The rate of payment is from 1½ to 5 cents per word on acceptance. The woman interest in these stories, if any, should be subdued.

*Christian Board of Publication*, St. Louis, Mo., announces its needs as follows: For *The Girls' Circle*, a weekly paper for high school girls, Erma R. Bishop, editor, it desires short-stories of 2500 words, serials of eight to ten chapters, articles of 100 to 2000 words, illustrated if possible, and poems not longer than 20 lines. *The Boy's Comrade*, a weekly for boys of high school age, Orrin T. Anderson, editor, uses short-stories of 2000 to 2500 words, serials of eight to twelve chapters, and articles of biographical, scientific or general informational interest, 100 to 1500 words, accompanied by illustrative photograph if possible. *Junior World*, a weekly for junior boys and girls, Constance Warren, editor, is in the market for short-stories of 2000 to 2500 words, serials of eight to ten chapters, poems not longer than 20 lines, and articles of travel, biographical, scientific, handicraft or general informational interest, 100 to 1800 words. *Storyland*, edited by Constance Warren, uses stories of 300 to 1000 words for children under nine. It also desires simple handicraft articles of 300 to 500 words, drawings or photographs with child or animal subjects, and poems not longer than 20 lines. *The Front Rank*, Orrin T. Anderson, editor, is a weekly for young people and adults. Its market needs are short-stories of 2000 to 2500 words, the characters preferably young people 18 to 25, moral in tone but not "preachy," and serials of ten to twelve chapters, about 2000 words to the chapter. These should introduce both young men and young women characters, of the same ages as above. Articles of general information and biography, accompanied by illustrative photographs, are desired. Poems should be from 8 to 30 lines. Photographs of unusual scenic beauty or special interest for use on the cover page are desired.

*College Life*, 119 Wooster Street, New York, N. Pines, editor, reports; "Will you please advise your readers that we cannot use stories longer than 1000 words. However, we can use jokes, sketches and short humorous skits with a collegiate slant, and a touch of satire."

*Food and Health Education*, 37 W. Thirty-ninth Street, Winifred Stuart Gibbs, editor, writes: "*Food and Health Education* is primarily interested in material for home economics teachers. We like to have articles tell something of the ways of putting over nutrition to children of all ages. The subject should be presented informally and should possibly be illustrated by material used in classrooms as charts or other graphic devices prepared by the children themselves. We do not use poetry. Our rate of payment depends on the value of the material."

*The Sunday School Times* has erroneously been given the address of 1816 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, which is the location of the *American Sunday School Union*, in the Handy Market List. The correct address of *The Sunday School Times* is 1031 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

# *Here is a real* **REMOVAL SALE**

In moving our magazine offices to another part of the building, to accommodate enlargement of the printing plant, it was found that we have on hand an unnecessary supply of back copies of the magazine, from January, 1922, to the present date. Rather than throw these away, we decided to place them on sale at a bargain price which will enable writers who desire complete files to obtain them at nominal cost. While they last, these back copies will be sold at the rate of

***Twelve Copies (one year's issues) at \$1.00***

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These issues contain a wealth of informative and inspirational material, the best work of leading writers and editors who have something to say on writing. A partial list of the contents follows:

## 1922

**JANUARY**—Rachel Crothers's Recipe for Success (Arthur Chapman). Writing a Novel in Thirty Days (Arthur Preston Hankins). Conscious Evolution and the Short-Story (David Raffelock). How to Edit a House Organ (Harry A. Earnshaw).

**FEBRUARY**—Louis Joseph Vance (Interview). Getting the Angle (David Raffelock).

**MARCH**—Rex Beach on Writing the Novel and Picture Play. Getting the Plot Idea (David Raffelock). Writing the Short Editorial (Frank D. Hopley).

**APRIL**—The Future of Western Fiction\* (Wm. McLeod Raine). Easy Reading—Hard Writing (H. Bedford-Jones). Branding Local Color Into Cowboy Yarns (Edwin Hunt Hoover). Synthetic Characterization (David Raffelock).

**MAY**—The Greatest Fiction Market in the World (Arthur Chapman). Stumbling Blocks of Authorship (James Knapp Reeve).

**JUNE**—Writing for the Two Million (Julian Kilman). Joseph Hergesheimer (Interview). Human Interest (David Raffelock).

**JULY**—Arthur Stringer (Interview). The Mathematics of a Book (William Harlowe Briggs of Harpers). The Final Punch (David Raffelock).

**AUGUST**—Symposium by Wm. McLeod Raine, Howard R. Marsh, Edwin H. Hoover, Arthur Tuckerman. How to Finish Plots (Prof. Walter B. Pitkin). Stories That Live (Chauncey Thomas). Make Your Library Pay Dividends (H. Bedford-Jones).

**SEPTEMBER**—A Mystery Writer's Routine (Interview with Herman Landon). Catering to Boys (E. E. Harriman). Know It—Then Write It (Interview with Courtney Ryley Cooper).

**OCTOBER**—How to Produce Strong Drama (Thomas H. Uzzell). Pulling Down the Big Prizes (Roy L. McCardell). Stick to Your Last (Edwin Hoover).

**NOVEMBER**—Eugene Manlove Rhodes (Interview by Wm. M. Raine). Harry Maule, Editor of Short-Stories (Interview). Testing Titles (L. E. Eubanks). Greeting-Card Verses (Wanda Moore).

**DECEMBER**—Emerson Hough on the Craftmanship of Writing. Confessions of a Jazz-Jingler (Fred Mierisch).

## 1923

**JANUARY**—The Outdoor Writer (Warren Hastings Miller). Wilbur Hall (Interview). Those British Serial Rights (H. Bedford-Jones).

**FEBRUARY**—How May Authors Ring the Bell More Consistently? (Arthur E. Scott). The Syndicate Game (H. Bedford-Jones).

**MARCH**—Motive (Warren Hastings Miller). Getting the Most Out of an Idea (P. W. Luce). Twenty Minutes with a Trade Journal Editor (Willard E. Hawkins).

**APRIL**—Gouverneur Morris (Interview). Function and Management of Clews (G. Glenwood Clark). A Plot Builder (Culpeper Chunn).

**MAY**—The Story is the Thing (A. H. Bittner). What is Writing Talent? (Thomas H. Uzzell). The Agent Speaks.

**JUNE**—The Day's Work (Warren H. Miller). Second-hand Local Color (Edwin H. Hoover). British Serial Rights.

**JULY**—Draw Upon Your Fund of Life-Impressions (Arthur Preston Hankins). Psychoanalyzing Words (David Raffelock). A Writer's Editorial Experience (Interview with Karl Edwin Harriman). Fannie Hurst on Writing.

**AUGUST**—The Inside Story of "West of the Water Tower" (Homer Croy). Fictional Technique and Its Uses (Thomas H. Uzzell). The Motion Picture Market (Roy L. McCardell). Hackneyed Story Motifs (James Knapp Reeve).

**SEPTEMBER**—Action (A. H. Bittner). Unconscious Technique (William MacLeod Raine). Realism (Thomas H. Uzzell).

**OCTOBER**—Karl Edwin Harriman Says West Beckons to Writers. The Psychology of Style (Thomas H. Uzzell). The U. S. F. S. and Western Fiction (Arthur Hawthorne Carhart).

**NOVEMBER**—Getting That Plot (A. H. Bittner). Make Your Reader Feel (Thomas H. Uzzell). The Breath of Life (George Commodore Shinn). Tips for Writers of Juveniles (James Knapp Reeve).

**DECEMBER**—The Theme Chart (Warren Hastings Miller). Robert Cortes Holliday Offers Hints to Essay Writers. The Authors' League and the Photoplay Schools.

## 1924

- JANUARY—Closed Shop in Filmdom is a Fact (A. G. Birch). A Defense of the American Tradition (William MacLeod Raine). As the Editor Views Your Story.
- FEBRUARY—Selling in England (H. Bedford-Jones). Complexes that Inhibit Writers (Thomas H. Uzzell). The Silent Horde (N. Bryllion Fagin).
- MARCH—Editorial Shorthand (A. H. Bittner). William McPhee (Interview). What the Reader Wants (H. Bedford-Jones). Writing for Juveniles (Anna S. Warner).
- APRIL—The First Hundred Stories (Howard Philip Rhoades). Stories That Live (A. H. Bittner). Teaching Short-Story Writing in the Colleges (W. F. G. Thatcher).
- MAY—Magic (Willard King Bradley). Selling in England (H. Bedford-Jones). What's a Plot (Robert Saunders Dowst).
- JUNE—The Truth About Writers and Writing (Lemuel L. De Bra). Winning Editorial Favor (Willard King Bradley). Writing for the "True" Magazines (Ralph Parker Anderson).
- JULY—Plotting the Tabloid Story (Ralph R. Perry). Methods and Markets for Tabloid Writers (Jack Woodford). Manuscript Salesmanship (E. M. Wickes). Juvenile Writing That Has Paid (Leslie E. Dunkin).
- AUGUST—Character as a Source of Plot Material (Interview with Julian Street). Teaching the Short-Story (Prof. Lynn Clark). The Boy's Point of View in Reviewing (Russell Gordon Carter).
- SEPTEMBER—"Live Your Stories" Advice of Carl Clausen. Is Your Psychology True? (Merlin Moore Taylor). Know Human Nature If You Would Write Fiction (Horace Wade).
- OCTOBER—When the Editor Says "Cut It Down" (Ralph R. Perry). Tone-Color in Articles (Arthur Hawthorne Carhart). Why Few Original Scenarios Are Sold (Interview with Pearl Keating).
- NOVEMBER—Writing the Historical Story (A. H. Bittner). Study (Warren Hastings Miller). Reading for Style (Roy L. McCardell). Turning Short-Stories Into a Novel (Robert McBlair). Causes of Failure from the Editorial Standpoint (Heather Landon).
- DECEMBER—Selling (Warren Hastings Miller). An Undeveloped Short-Story Field (Austin Haines). The Editor and the Unrush Mail (Ralph R. Perry).

## 1925

- JANUARY—Plagiarism (A. H. Bittner). Use of Query Bulletins (Albert Sidney Gregg). Dead Stories (Warren Hastings Miller).
- FEBRUARY—Nothing to Write About (Courtney Ryley Cooper). The "Take-off" in Article Writing (Arthur Hawthorne Carhart). Where They Fail (Julian Kilman). Gathering Authentic Facts (Xeno W. Putnam).
- MARCH—Crashing the Editorial Gate (Ralph R. Perry). The Story "Arch" and Its Unity (Thomas Hall Shastid, L.L.B.). Plagiarism Impossible (Chauncey Thomas). Teasing (Willis K. Jones).
- APRIL—Atmosphere—and Other Things (Warren Hastings Miller). The Writer and the Radio (Oliver Jenkins). The Art of Sabatini (Edwin Hunt Hoover).
- MAY—The Series Story (A. H. Bittner). Theme in Article-Writing (Arthur Hawthorne Carhart). How to Use the Rhyming Dictionary (Hazel Harper Harris). More Laughs in Literature (Observations of Ellis Parker Butler).
- JUNE—To the Writer Who Has No Plots (Homer Croy). Writing for the Radio Publication (Justine Mansfield). Animation in Business-Article Illustrations (Ruel McDaniel). What of the Juveniles? (Myrtle Jamison Trachsel).
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- SEPTEMBER—Technique of Radio Play-Writing (James D. Corcoran). Develop Your Stories From a Situation Says Holworthy Hall.
- OCTOBER—A Voice Crying in the Wilderness (William M. Stuart). Pleasing the Trade Journals (Sophie Wenzel Ellis). The Age Viewpoint in Juveniles (Ann S. Warner). Capturing the Boys' Market in Britain (Ronald S. Lyons).
- NOVEMBER—A Handy Market List of Book Publishers. Convincingness (A. H. Bittner). The "Big" Story (Willard E. Hawkins). A Tip for Editors.
- DECEMBER—The Release From Mediocrity (A. H. Bittner). Random Remarks on Writing (Junius B. Smith). The Deeper Understanding (Willard E. Hawkins). The Handy Market List.

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THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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Denver, Colorado

*North-West Stories*, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York, according to an announcement, "needs Western short-stories right at this moment. Stories of the old Southwest, border rustlers, desert prospectors and frontier romance are all in the wants. Lengths from 3000 to 6000 words." *Lariat Story Magazine* of the same group "is pretty well filled up on humorous material, though of course a little more is never amiss if it's good enough. Serials enough on hand to last till about January 10." *Action Stories*, also of this group, "is pretty well filled up on long stuff. It can use immediately short-stories fitting its policy up to 6000 words." *Love Romances* "is in special need of stories from 5000 to 6000 words that have emotional depth and a strong love interest. The heroine should be placed in gripping situations and her emotions sympathetically treated. Stories should be written in the third person, and the plots should be strong in drama but not sophisticated. We don't want the so-called sex story or confession type." The editors of the above publications, all of Fiction House, Inc., state that any recent delay in correspondence has been due to vacations of the staff.

*The Farm Journal*, Philadelphia, aims to be the easiest to read and understand of all farm publications, according to a recent editorial announcement. "It always has been brief—boiled down." While it is edited for the farm home it appeals also "to folks in villages and elsewhere who have gardens, raise chickens, or who have farm or rural interests and contacts." Its influence is directed toward fighting for the interests of farmers, for rural free delivery, parcel post, postal savings banks, packer control, lower federal taxes, farm credits, etc. It features for its men readers articles on selling, buying, legislation, crop conditions, and all phases of agriculture, as well as building, radios, automobiles, schools, community development, etc. There are departments exclusively for women, covering the usual household miscellany. In addition, serials, short-stories, general articles, poetry, humor, auto camping, hunting, are featured. There are also departments for boys and girls. *The Farm Journal* pays 1 cent and up on acceptance.

*Every Girl's Magazine*, 31 E. Seventeenth Street, New York, Mary E. Squire, editor, states: "In general, we are interested in seeing short-stories of 4000 words or under. These can deal with mystery or adventure. They must appeal to girls of sixteen years." *Every Girl's* is listed as paying 1/3 to 1/2 cent a word on publication.

*Colour Magazine*, 37 King Street, Convent Garden, London, W. C. 2, England, is a market for unusual short-stories of from 2000 to 3500 words, and articles on art and the unusual in photography and painting, the latter accompanied by pictures. All pictures are printed in colors. Payment is made soon after acceptance at around five guineas (about \$24) per thousand words, with payment for pictures according to their unique quality.

*Junior Life*, a weekly magazine of the Standard Publishing Company, Box 5, Station N, Cincinnati, Ohio, desires stories or articles of interest and educational value to children from 8 to 12, up to a thousand words in length. Payment is at 50 cents per hundred words.

*Complete Story Magazine*, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, seems to be well supplied with long stories, but the editor asks for shorts of from 5000 to 10,000 words, with strong plots and "he-man" characters.

*Youth*, subtitled "A Magazine of the New Renaissance," is a new publication to be issued from 199 Waverly Place, New York. An announcement states that "in the magazine will be the prose and poetry of young writers, the graphic presentation of the work of young artists, sculptors, and musicians. Problems affecting youth will be discussed by youths themselves." No information is at hand as to rates paid for material or the financial standing of the publishers.

*A Child's Garden* has moved from 2161 Center Street, Berkeley, to Orlando, Calif. Frances M. Wigmore of the staff requests: "Please state that we are overstocked with material in all lines."

*Ziffs Magazine*, 550 Transportation Building, Chicago, J. S. Hart, editor, writes: "May I make a plea through your pages for snappy cover ideas for our magazine? We want ideas which involve only a single figure or not more than two main figures either with action or without, and a breezy, snappy catch line with a point to it. We will pay \$10 for every one we accept. Also please mention that we'd like to have a great deal more four and eight line nut verse or humorous verse of all kinds at that length. Also quite a number of pithy, pertinent epigrams." *Ziffs* has lately reduced its rates and is less prompt in its treatment of contributors, according to reports reaching this office.

*Household Guest*, Jackson Boulevard and Desplaines Street, Chicago, J. M. Woodman, writes an author regarding a manuscript submitted in May: "The present owners purchased the property July 9, 1925, at court sale. None of the old records, unused manuscripts, etc., came to us and we are unable to give you any report on the manuscript you claim to have submitted in May of this year. The old quarters at 141 W. Ohio Street have been completely cleared out and re-rented, and we do not think there is any chance for you to get the manuscript returned."

*Johns Hopkins Press*, Baltimore, Md., states: "We are unable to consider for publication manuscripts other than those by authors who are members of the Johns Hopkins University or lecturers before its assemblies."

Correspondence addressed to *Thrifty*, 797 Beacon Street, Boston, has been returned unclaimed. Letters addressed to a later address, 47 Farragut Road, So. Boston, were returned marked "refused."

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*College Humor*, 1050 N. La Salle Street, Chicago, notifies a contributor: "We secure all of our comic material from various humorous college publications with which we have contracts."

*The Fourth Estate*, 232 W. Fifty-Ninth Street, New York, Fred J. Runde, vice-president and general manager, writes: "I might mention that we are interested in very much the same material that *Editor & Publisher* uses except that we are specifically interested in anything that has to do with newspaper advertising and the newspaper business generally. We pay space rates upon date of publication."

*Laughs and Chuckles*, Ford Building, Wilmington, Del., Leonard B. Daly, editor, writes a contributor: "We have no definite scale of rates. Contributions are paid for on the basis of their merit as decided by our editorial staff. If you are willing to reconcile yourself to this system, as others have done, we will be pleased to have witty poems and paragraphs from your pen and we can assure you that the payment will be satisfactory."

*Variety Goods Magazine*, 812 Huron Road, Cleveland, Ohio, which goes to dealers in popular-priced merchandise, needs practical, detailed articles covering all phases of buying, selling, display, and handling of such merchandise, as well as descriptions of methods whereby small-town and variety, racket and chain store managers cut costs, give better service, and successfully meet the problems of competition, according to the editor, Harry E. Martin. "Articles on selling such merchandise, seasonable sales, plans and ideas, stunt selling, and many other methods and ideas are wanted. Here are some of our seasonal wants: January—White Goods, St. Valentine's Day, Washington's Birthday, Lincoln's Birthday. February—Easter Goods, St. Patrick's Day, Party Goods, Spring Millinery, Bulbs. March—Garden Supplies. April—House-Cleaning, Supplies, Garden Tools and Seeds, Small Hardware, House Furnishings, Auto Accessories. The test of every article for *Variety Goods Magazine* is: Will this information help other merchants sell this kind of merchandise? Payment for such material will be made after publication, at the rate of from ½ to 1 cent a word, depending upon the value of the ideas and the amount of editing necessary to make the material available for our columns. From \$1 to \$2 will be paid for each photo or drawing that we can use."

*Ourselves*, 1108 Capitol Building, Chicago, Arthur William Scott, editor, writes: "Perhaps your readers would like to hear that we are in the market for short-stories ranging from 1200 to 4000 words. The more unusual the theme and setting, the greater chance the story will have with us. First-class rates will be paid." *Ourselves* is subtitled, "A magazine for those who want to live."

*The Zephyr*, Clearwater, Fla., has been taken over by the St. Petersburg, Fla., *Tourist News*.

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THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

1839 Champa Street, Denver, Colo.

# THE S. T. C. NEWS

A Page of Comment and Gossip About the Simplified Training Course and Fiction Writing Topics in General

VOL. III, No. 1

JANUARY, 1926

EDITED BY DAVID RAFFELLO

## VALUABLE TRAINING

### Letters from Students Reflect Practical Worth of the S. T. C.

Since writing for the magazines is so obviously a paying occupation for those who succeed in selling their work, it is to be expected that many should want to try to enter the fiction-writing field—and that there should spring up many "schools" ready to take advantage of a demand. Often there is little consideration on the part of these so-called schools as to whether they are capable of giving authoritative, practical training.

The Author & Journalist has been established for more than ten years and during this time has endeavored constantly to maintain the highest standard of personal service for writers. It was not until the editors of the magazine had established their position in the writing world and had won the confidence of writers and editors that they developed the Simplified Training Course in Short-Story Writing, and offered it to serious, ambitious writers throughout the English-speaking world.

To establish its position of authority further, The Author & Journalist feels justified now and then in printing letters from students, authors and editors bearing upon the S. T. C.

The following is from a secretary of a Chamber of Commerce who is now taking The Author & Journalist training:

*Several times I've felt an inclination to write you my feelings about the course. I have studied three or four home training courses; with most of them there is a concomitant mass of intended inspirational matter which is an insult to a normal student's intelligence.*

*Your system—your grading idea and comment—make the course a highly worth-while reality. The course, being in earnest, breeds candor and sincerity in the student. When, early in the course, the student learns that he has not bitten at a mail-order "skin-game," he can conscientiously commence to work hard. Your system is to my mind superior to university systems. I heartily wish I had found the S. T. C. about five or six years ago.*

Charles Dickens's daughter prides herself on the fact that she has never made any attempt to enter the literary field.

Officers of the Hudson Bay Company have objected to the tendency of some authors to mention the company or its employees in a derogatory way. Suit will be filed against writers who thus prove objectionable.

Books are men of higher stature.—E. B. Browning.

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## A Few Words of Gossip With the Editor

Many writers are eager to improve and enlarge their vocabularies—and this is a very desirable ambition. It shouldn't be put off to that happy day when one will have lots of time, but begun at once.

An S. T. C. student recently wrote me for advice in this important matter. Perhaps my reply will be of value to other writers, also.

It seems to me that a good way to learn new words is to jot down the sentence in which you find a new or unfamiliar word. Then look up the meaning of the word in an unabridged dictionary, thus obtaining the various meanings the word has. It might also be a good plan to look up the word in a book of synonyms, thus determining its exact shade of meaning. Of course, you will not find all words in a book of synonyms, but those that you do find will give you an added command of them.

After you have looked up your word and fully understood its significance in the particular sentence you have copied, then it is very often a good plan to make up your own sentences, using that word. In your speech turn over in your mind how you could use the word instead of your everyday words; or if it is an everyday word, then try to use it in your speech instead of the one you have been using.

After you have looked up a number of words, make paragraphs employing the words and using them to express the different meanings they may have. This method will generally help the writer to learn new words and to retain the ones he has learned.

The genial and wise Havelock Ellis has a fine chapter, "On Writing," in his latest book, "The Dance of Life." Every writer, and especially the writer who is desirous of turning out the finest work of which he is capable, will do well to read that chapter.

But I should rather urge critics, and especially literary critics, to read this book, ponder much upon it, and go forth wiser and better men.

Mr. Ellis discourses upon the practice of condemning in toto the use of the split infinitive, the preposition at the end of a sentence, and like bugaboos of many critics. The writer points out that there is the authority of some of the greatest authors for doing the very things that are often so seriously condemned.

The wide-spread disapproval of the split infinitive and other grammatical constructions is in a large measure due to a certain type of critic. This critic con-

## REALISM

### Director Shows How This May Be Secured In Stories

Some writers have difficulty in making their characters vivid and realistic. A writer, troubled in this matter, appealed to the director of the Simplified Training Course for aid. The following are excerpts from the letter written in reply.

If your stories lack humaneness or your characters are "wooden," or if your action lacks punch, it is likely that the technical structure of the story is bad, that you haven't become fully aware of the means at your disposal with which you can give your story vitality.

Many amateurs fail to make their stories human and their characters real because they have never been taught and never learned some very important facts about writing. An amateur will frequently go through a story flatly stating that John was sad and Mable was happy and that in the end both of them were contented. The mere statement of emotional conditions is too simple to give the feeling of life. If John is sad, the reader wants to understand John so that he himself can recognize John's feeling. For the author to say Mable is happy doesn't convince the reader. He wants to see Mable so that he will know she is happy. The S. T. C. lesson on emotional appeal is one of the most important lessons in the course. It helps the student to give the feeling of life and humanity to the characters and to the story.

cerns himself with the outward form only; he is not able to understand nuances of meaning or "tone" which might thoroughly compensate for the use of constructions which school marmes are wont to decry. By over-emphasizing grammar, punctuation and the like, the critic has an easy, standardized critical path to follow. He can utter blanket denunciations without for a moment considering the possible value of the constructions condemned. He confines himself to this mechanical sort of criticism, and thereby wraps a cloak about his incompetency to discover more fundamental and important shortcomings in the work.

Even some short-story instructors consider that they have helped a student to improve his story and make it salable by fiercely pointing out every split infinitive, cliché, "awkward" sentence, and the like.

### Prize Contests

Walter Clare Martin, Box 8, Vanderveer Park Station, Brooklyn, N. Y., announces a contest in which he will award \$1000 for the purpose of "seeking poetic writing having in it at least the elements of greatness and high beauty, whatever may be its unadaptability to immediate and commercial publication. The prize is to be awarded not for the best composition submitted, but for the best, only if at the same time it is recognizably great. Neither a novel nor a story in the generally accepted sense will be considered for the prize. The winning manuscript must primarily seek and attain poetic beauty—although it may be written either in verse or prose. Contributors may submit three pieces of work at the same time or at intervals. The work may have any theme, contain one word or one thousand. It it contains more than a thousand, only an excerpt should be sent. Previous publication no handicap, unless the author has become well-known or wealthy. Unusual scripts will be saved for judgment. *Ordinary scripts will be destroyed.* None will be returned. Contributors retain all rights to their work, except that I may quote from some of them in writing articles about the progress of this search. The contest will close January 1, 1927."

Dodd, Mead & Company, Pictorial Review and First National Pictures, Inc., will jointly pay \$16,500 net, plus royalty, for the best novel by an American author who has not previously had a novel published in book form. Manuscripts must be submitted before October 1, 1926. The winning manuscript will be announced by December 1, 1926, and serialized in *Pictorial Review* in the spring of 1927, published in book form in the fall of that year and filmed immediately thereafter. The author retains all other rights, including additional book royalties. Authors of books of short-stories, poetry, belles lettres, or general subjects, magazine and newspaper writers, as well as those who have had nothing published, are invited to compete. Complete prospectus will be furnished upon request by Curtis Brown, Ltd., 116 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York.

New Hotel Sherman, Chicago, announces a prize story contest with four prizes of \$100, \$50, \$30, and \$20, for the most amusing true story concerning a hotel or its guests submitted by any employee of a hotel before February 1, 1926. Stories should be sent direct to Frank W. Bering, vice president and managing director, and marked Attention Contest Committee.

The Society for the Prevention of Crime of New York City offers a prize of \$2500 for the best essay of 2000 words on the most promising formula for disestablishing crime in New York City. The manuscript must be typewritten and be at the office of the above not later than 11 o'clock on the morning of January 11, 1926.

Harper's Magazine, 49 E. Thirty-third Street, New York, announces an annual intercollegiate literary contest, which will be held for the first time during the present academic year, closing May 1, 1926. A first prize of \$500, a second prize of \$300, and a third prize of \$200 are offered for the best pieces of English prose, not more than 4000 words long (or not more than 7000 words long if fiction) written by undergraduates in American colleges and universities. The judges will be Christopher Morley, Zona Gale, and William McPhee. The manuscripts will be entered through the colleges, not more than five being allowed to an institution. The contribution winning first prize will be published in *Harper's Magazine*, and the preliminary announcement adds: "It is the purpose of the House of Harper to establish relationship with the winners of the prizes and with other competitors whose work shows unusual promise, so as to be of all possible help and encouragement in their future development."

Rays from the Rose Cross, Oceanside, Calif., offers prizes of \$25, \$15, \$10, for the three best articles of not over 2500 words on the following subjects: Occult philosophy—articles on any phase of esoteric thought and its practical application; astrology—theoretical or practical; health and scientific diet. Articles should be submitted before April 1, 1926. Articles which do not take prizes but which can be used in the magazine will be retained for a year's subscription. The editors reserve the right to modify the articles submitted to bring them within the requirements of their philosophy.

The judges in the contest for the best novel in the contest announced last month by Edward J. Clode, Inc., 1506 Fifth Avenue, New York, will be Grant Overton, fiction editor of *Collier's*, Harry Hansen, literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News* and Edward J. Clode, of the publishing firm bearing his name. While they expect to receive many manuscripts from established authors, they hope also to unearth through this contest some promising new writers. The prize offered is \$2500. As we understand the conditions of the contest, the writer of the winning novel will be required to give up all royalties on the first 12,500 copies, and also one-half of the money received from the sale of second serial and motion-picture rights. For a new author, whose book might not ordinarily be expected to sell very many thousand copies, the prize is attractive, but it would be less likely to appeal to a writer of assured position, because the prize is in lieu of royalties on the first 12,500 copies, which under the ordinary contract would amount to about \$3500 in addition to all, instead of half, of the amount received from the sale of film and second-serial rights.

The *Brooklyn Eagle*, Brooklyn, N. Y., pays \$2 for every love letter published. One is published daily.

(Continued on Page 32)



# THE WIT-SHARPENER

A MONTHLY EXERCISE IN PLOT-BUILDING—PRIZES FOR  
THE BEST DEVELOPMENTS

THE WIT-SHARPENERS end with this issue of THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST. We wish they might end in a blaze of glory; but the offerings still do not come up to the standard intended by this department.

We have a hunch that the Wit-Sharpener have served their purpose, however, for letters have come in by the dozens telling the editors of the benefits accruing from whetting the creative intelligence against the problems submitted. Stories have been conceived as a result of study on Wit-Sharpener; plots have been developed and sold. But our correspondents frankly state that they are drawing dividends from this department without submitting their ideas in competition for the prizes offered.

Hence, we have "worked ourselves out of a job." But never mind! There are consolations!

The problem:

Lucia Kendall, an orphan with no relatives, and just enough money left for her education, completes college and law school, and is nicely established with a New York firm, when she meets Dr. David Young, who is doing notable experimental work in tropical diseases in the Philippines. He went there for his own health, and must continue living there. He loves the tropics and is completely and happily absorbed in his work, his delicate, motherless little son, David Jr., three years old, and his invalid mother.

He is inordinately happy when he finds that Lucia returns his love. Hers is a love that lavishes itself on those about her. But though David and baby David adore her, and lean on her love, filling her heart with tenderness, the mother-in-law, a perfect termagant, a very devil of a woman, insanely jealous of her son's affection, makes life a torment to Lucia. Dr. David can do little to adjust matters as he has only means enough to run one household, so cannot support his mother separately, and there are no relatives with whom she could live, even if she would.

Lucia goes down fast, developing anemia, which threatens to become pernicious, if she remains. Her doctors tell her she will die if she lives in the tropics any longer. Her religion and Dr. David's will not allow divorce.

Frantic, and torn between love, duty and violent unhappiness, Lucia decides to break the threads of her married life, go back to New York, and begin life again.

*She goes, leaving her heart behind her, is established once more in the office, when she realizes she is to have a baby.*

Willis K. Jones, who takes first money in the current contest, is one of those who has worked the department both ways. He has written stories—and sold 'em—by sharpening his imagination and ingenuity on the problems offered by the Wit-Sharpener; also he has collected a number of checks from THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST in prize money.

Allowances being made for the circumstance that Mr. Jones uses a scientific discovery not justified in fact, the development submitted to last month's problem has dramatic possibilities:

## FIRST PRIZE WINNER

Dr. David, though hearing that Lucia has lost her job, cannot arrange her return. He has discovered that the illness which made his mother a jealous devil—a contagious tropical disease caught from servants—has attacked him. Once, a little more demented than usual, she tried to kill her grandson. The doctor, though the parting almost breaks his heart, must entrust David to a friend's family. Ceaselessly he investigates the dread disease, afraid that any minute it will master him.

He isolates the germ. Terrible days of anxiety pass. Having sent Lucia what money he could scrape up, he can buy no more equipment. Animals gone, he cannot complete his experiments. He seeks a sick native on whom to try the serum, but they shun him, thinking the family devil-ridden.

Finally, writing Lucia farewell, he locks himself in his laboratory. He meditates. If he dies, he will leave three people penniless. But in his condition he is equally useless. Into his veins he injects serum. Kill or cure! He sees no one, eats nothing all day. At night a second injection. In the earliest sunlight he examines a drop of his blood under the microscope. The proportion of disease germs has decreased. A third injection that evening convinces him he has discovered the cure.

He borrows money, cabling Lucia to come, and telling her his success, then seeks his mother to cure her.

Lucia brings news he has been awarded a huge bonus for expenses and further investigation. He has even been proposed for Nobel Prize. "Now you



can find a home for your mother," she rejoices, "and without worry, I'll stay well."

Dr. David smiles. David, Junior, welcomes his new mother, and grandma, cured, no longer a termagant, is almost as affectionate in her greeting.

Second award goes to Miss Louise Flint, Pasadena, Calif. Miss Flint's solution involves one phase that puzzles the judges—that Lucia considers the proposal of a suitor "for the sake of the child." There is nothing in the premise to justify the belief that Lucia will be in disgrace. Aside from this, however, her conclusion seems to fill the bill nicely.

#### SECOND PRIZE WINNER

The firm has a legal matter concerning a Portuguese client in Hawaii that necessitates sending a personal representative to the islands. Lucia, through an impulse to be nearer her husband, asks to be sent, and as she is fully competent, they agree.

She writes to Dr. Young of her trip and tells him when she expects her child, asking him to meet her in the islands. The mother-in-law opens the letter and, seeing chance for absolute estrangement, deftly alters date of expectation. She also writes Lucia Dr. Young has secured divorce on grounds of desertion.

Dr. Young, reading the letter, is torn by conflicting emotions and in first resentment sends her a denunciatory note, but love finally prevails and he rushes to steamer to reach Lucia and give her child a father's name.

The client, Dravado, a handsome and wealthy exporter of middle age, falls in love with Lucia but is, of course, refused. However, when the Doctor's bitter letter arrives and the other also, she feels that perhaps for the sake of her child, she should consider Dravado's honorable intentions, though her heart is all Dr. Young's.

With her final consent, the wedding is arranged. Dr. Young arrives at church just before the knot is tied and marriage is called off dramatically amid explanations. Dravado, wild with grief, suicides, and it is found his heavy life insurance is made out in Lucia's favor. As the rest of the large estate goes to distant relatives, she feels free to accept her bequest.

With an independent fortune the reunited couple can live separate from his mother. Hawaii proves suited to his tropical experiments and to Lucia's health and it is punishment enough for the mother that an ocean must separate her from the son she so jealously cherishes.

Third prize is one of those "reductio ad absurdum" things wherein the author pokes fun at both the problem and her own development. It offers a novel angle—but probably wouldn't be considered if this were not the last of the series. It might encourage others to be frivolous at the Wit-Sharpener's expense!

Mrs. Jessie Armstrong Crill is the guilty party!

#### THIRD PRIZE WINNER

Lucia lets nature take its course. The minute the baby, a beautiful curly-haired, angel-faced girl, gets her breath, her ma and nursie leave on the California Limited (drawing-room), for where? Guess! HOLLYWOOD! They go right to the Hollywood Hotel and make appointments with every casting director of any importance.

At two years of age little Loreenie is drawing down fifty thousand a week, they say! Dr. David, by this time, is getting sort o' fed up on diseases and nose rings and sich. There is one beautiful Philippine lady (but this is for Mr. Hoover, not for the confession hounds) but, anyway, he decides to try California's well-known climate for awhile. Alas for Romance! Hollywood and a beautiful Spanish villa with swimming-pool in back yard and Japs to do all the dirty work, have agreed with the ethereal Lucia far, far too well! She is fat! Yes! Simply huge, in spite of lamb chops and pineapple and every known device invented by the fiends of Hades for the eradication of curves. David doesn't recognize his own wife. Good one on him. (Nothing new in Hollywood, though!) Someone introduces them, in time, and Dave makes himself right at home in the villa. He certainly is proud of his little Loreenie. His girl child! His beautiful, pettie! In about six months Dave himself is so fat he has to be carried out to his limousine in a sedan chair. He and the wife are thinking of taking up physical culture, but they just kinda' kept putting it off! They should worry about anything, so long as Loreenie stays thin!—(All Rights Reserved!)

That's all, unless popular demand should necessitate a re-establishment of the Wit-Sharpener at some future date.

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## Queries and Comments

*In this department are published suggestions, queries, answers to these queries volunteered either by the editors or by readers, and bits of comment or experience germane to the purpose of the magazine. The editors will select only letters deemed to have general interest. Names will be signed unless initials are specified. Communications should be brief.*



### USING REAL PLACES IN FICTION

Mr. Bittner's article in the November issue of your magazine has started me thinking. Is it true that an author may use the town he lives in as a setting for stories—describe people, houses, public buildings, and streets, as they really are? I have often thought that if I dared do that I might have more success in writing, but I feared that people might recognize themselves and incidents that have happened, and take offense. Ought the name of the town and streets be disguised?

MRS. E. B.

ANSWER BY THE EDITOR: Mr. Bittner probably had reference to general localities, in his admonition that the author should stick to ground with which he is familiar. If familiar with small towns, for example, he would do well to place his stories in small-town settings; if familiar with a foreign country, he should be able to write convincingly of scenes laid in that country. In using actual places, however, the author's judgment must be relied upon to determine how far they shall be disguised. What Arthur Sullivan Hoffman designates "maintaining the illusion of reality," is the important consideration. If the setting is a metropolis, it is better to name the city and to designate actual streets as far as possible. The reader knows there is an actual Chicago—San Francisco—New York and accepts such a setting as real. But he knows there is no city of half a million or more inhabitants named Squeedunk, so he would instinctively regard events as fictitious if laid in such a city. There are so many smaller towns with which he is unfamiliar, however, that a fictitious name may be given to the small town without shattering the illusion. Usually, it is wise to disguise the names of small towns; but many fictional stories are published in which actual names of towns are used. The danger, as the correspondent suggests, is that persons living in these towns may recognize, or think they recognize themselves, and take offense. Changing names of places—when these

names are immaterial—gives the author more freedom, and usually is to be recommended.

### PROTECTING PLAY MATERIAL

What shall I do to bring a manuscript safely to the attention of a producer of plays? How do I safeguard myself against possible taking of the idea or play without payment? When should one have a play copyrighted, and how? Before presenting it to a producer or afterward?

MRS. C. B. CHASE, *Palm Beach, Fla.*

ANSWER BY THE EDITOR: It is hardly likely that your play would be stolen—there is too much risk to tempt any sane person to such a venture. However, a play manuscript (unlike other manuscripts) can be copyrighted. The proper blanks to fill out can be obtained by writing to the Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

An equally good way to be prepared in case it became necessary to prove your ownership would be to go before a notary and swear to a statement that you are the author of the \_\_\_\_\_, giving a summary of it. A couple of witnesses to your statement, who could swear that they know the play to be original with you, would make it the more binding.

Our playwright friends tell us that the play managers and producers are exceedingly slow about making reports or returning submitted plays. Some have been kept unread for years. It seems to be a very unsatisfactory field. A playwright has the most discouraging lot of any writer. Those who succeed seem to do so largely through personal acquaintance with and constant contact with the producers.

### ARE THESE MASTERPIECES?

I have wondered if your magazine has noticed the series of short short-stories that are running in *Collier's*. Each week the authors, Octavus Roy Cohen, Zona Gale, Rupert Hughes, and Sophie Kerr, contribute what the *Collier's* editors term masterpieces of present-day short-story writing. My inquiry is to find if THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST would consider them the same.

EDGAR J. HODGES, *Elk City, Okla.*

BY THE EDITOR: Not having had time to read these stories, we are passing the query along to readers who may have interesting comments to make.

## PUBLISHING FAIRY TALES

Recently I sent the manuscript of a child's book to a Boston publishing house. They wrote me a lengthy letter in return, praising the work very highly, and concluded by saying they would publish it if I would be willing to share in the expense. Said they had a co-operative plan in mind that they would like to outline to me if I was interested. Is this a reliable firm, and is this plan of authors sharing the expense "done"? The principal reason for refusal of the manuscript by other publishers seemed to be that it was a fairy story.

Mrs. G. E.

ANSWER BY THE EDITOR: We are not acquainted with the publishing house mentioned. However, it is only under most exceptional circumstances that any author should be advised to pay all or part of the cost of publishing a book. Firms that require such "co-operation" really are printing concerns, not publishers. They have no adequate organization for putting the book on the market, and their interest usually ends with the delivery of a few copies to the author.

It is strange that comparatively few legitimate publishers will undertake to issue fairy stories. In THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST's recent canvass of all the active book publishers in America, the results of which were published in the November issue, one of the questions asked was: "Do you publish fairy stories?" Many ignored this question. Many answered emphatically, "No." A study of the Handy Market List of Book Publishers, however, reveals several that publish "all types" of juveniles, which probably means that fairy tales are included, and a few that specify fairy stories in particular.

## PROTECTING AN IDEA

Regarding the wish of W. J. K. to protect his idea of an extremely novel magazine: why can he not prepare a number, hire it done into print and issue five or six copies, which he sells to friends at any figure he can induce them to pay? Then he can copyright his magazine, name and all.

As I understand our copyright law, as soon as anything has been published for any general distribution—extent not stated—it may be copyrighted fully.

I have been told by a playwright that he had three copies printed, one for the copyright office, one for himself, one for a friend, and got his copyright on a play he had no intention of producing for a year or more.

E. E. HARRIMAN, *Los Angeles, Cal.*

COMMENT: Mr. Harriman's plan is good—though it is our understanding that the title would have to be patented, not copyrighted. But can anyone suggest a plan whereby the idea may be protected without the expense of printing the magazine first?

Plays intended for the stage, as we understand it, can be copyrighted in manuscript form.

## Finish this Plot— Win a Prize! \$40.00 in Prizes

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Dr. Burton

**PRIZES:** Try finishing this plot—it's easy. 1st Prize \$25.00; 2nd, \$10.00; 3rd, \$5.00. Send only one solution, not over 100 words. Don't copy plot. Write name, age (18 or over), address, and number of words plainly. Contest closes February 10th. No plots returned. Use your imagination, you may win \$25.00. Anyway, it's good practice. Try. Show this plot to your friends.

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## Prize Contests

(Continued from Page 27)

The Tennessee Women's Press and Author's Club has announced the Maria Thompson Daviess Memorial Poetry contest in which a prize of \$10 will be awarded for the best poem on any subject submitted to Elizabeth Thompson, 1919 Adelicia Avenue, Nashville, Tenn., between January 1, and April 1, 1926. The contest is open to any Southern writer—born in the South or living in the South. Poem should not contain more than fourteen lines.

The Farm Journal, Washington Square, Philadelphia, Pa., offers prizes totaling \$250 for the best reports on the good or harm done by the cat, weazel, squirrel, chipmunk or skunk. Contest closes February 1, 1926. Further details may be received from the publishers.

The Evening World, 63 Park Row, New York, announces that it will pay \$2000 in 159 prizes, ranging from \$250 to \$5, for the most complete and correct solutions of the mystery in "The Green Archer," a serial story which began in its issue of December 5th. All except the final installment will be published by January 30th, and solutions must be received before 6 p. m., February 5th. Solution must contain not more than 300 words. Further details may be obtained from the Mystery Story Editor.

Opportunity, a journal of Negro life, 127 E. Twenty-third Street, New York, announces a series of contests to foster creative literary effort among Negroes. The prizes are as follows: For the best three short-stories dealing with some phase of Negro life within 5000 words, \$100, \$50 and \$25. For the best four poems, \$50, \$10 and \$5. For the best three plays, \$60, \$35 and \$15. For the best three essays, limited to 3000 words, \$50, \$30 and \$10. For the best three personal-experience sketches within 2000 words, \$30, \$20 and \$10. For the best three musical compositions, \$75, \$50 and \$25. Entries must be submitted under a nom de plume, with a sealed envelope containing the name and address of contestant. Contest closes January 31st.

The Bob Edwards Publishing Company, Box 218, Minneapolis, Minn., announces that its *Calgary Eye-Opener* magazine is in the market for humor. It is stated that a minimum of \$5 is paid for funny stories and jokes, and a \$2 minimum for epigrams. Verse will be accepted with the minimum at the publishers' discretion.

Ziff's, 608 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago, announces a contest open to amateur artists, in which the awards will be contracts for art work at space rates ranging from \$1000 to \$50. Contestants are to submit drawings to the Art Contest Editor, who will select from five to twenty for publication in each issue. The readers will be asked to vote for their favorites, and the artists receiving the highest number of votes by September 25th, 1926, will be awarded the contracts.

(Continued on Page 34)



## BREVITIES

Items, clippings and suggestions for this department are welcomed. The effort is to select for publication the more important or interesting news of the writing and publishing fields.

Frank A. Munsey, head of the great Munsey publishing house, whose magazines and newspapers have furnished employment for thousands of writers throughout nearly half a century, died December 22 in the Lenox Hospital, New York, following an operation for appendicitis.

Overcoming almost insurmountable difficulties and discouragement at the outset of his publishing career, Mr. Munsey advanced from poverty to wealth and power through his indomitable will. His first magazine venture was the *Golden Argosy*, which was started as a boys' and girls' paper in 1882. When he was disappointed in not receiving the financial backing upon which he had counted in launching this magazine, he carried it on without financial backing, and after four years of battling, succeeded in turning the tide toward success. His career has been likened to the career of a typical hero in the stories of Horatio Alger, Jr., who was one of his first contributors.

Munsey launched various magazines, the three now continued being *Munsey's*, *The Argosy All-Story*, and *Flynn's*. He bought and sold various newspapers, and at the time of his death owned two, the *New York Sun* and the *Evening Telegram*. His estate is appraised at several millions.

Harry Stephen Keeler, popular author of mystery stories, who lives, writes and handles an editorial desk in Chicago, underwent a very delicate eye operation this month in Denver at the hands of the renowned Dr. Edward Jackson. The operation, the fifth of its kind thus far performed, consisted of the transplantation of the right superior rectus (lifting muscle) to compensate for insufficiency of the superior oblique (intorting muscle). Mr. Keeler has recently turned from magazine serial writing to the book field. Hutchinson and Co., of London, will bring out two of his books a year. "The Voice of the Seven Sparrows" and "Find the Clock" have already appeared, while "The Spectacles of Mr. Cagliostro" is slated for early appearance.

A handy suggestion-reference book for writers is the Atlantic Monthly Almanac for 1926, published by the Atlantic Monthly Company. It contains the usual features of the old-style almanac, such as calendars, religious and holiday dates, quotations, etc. Ten cents postpaid.

William MacLeod Raine, the novelist, and wife, are expected to return from Paris early in January.

H. Bedford-Jones has returned from a stay of a year or more in London and writes from Ann Arbor, Mich., "Congratulations on the improvements in makeup. The magazine looks fine."

Ira Rich Kent, formerly editor of *The Youth's Companion*, has joined the staff of Houghton-Mifflin Company, book publishers.

Nicholas C. Benziger of the old established publishing firm, Benziger Brothers, New York publishers of Catholic books, died at Summit, N. J., October 18th.

Harry La Mertha, of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, was elected president of the National Association of Radio Writers organized at Washington, D. C., recently. Stephen L. Coles of the *New York Herald Tribune* was chosen vice-president; Thomas Stevenson of Washington, secretary; Stuart C. Mahanay of the *Country Gentleman*, treasurer.

William Johnson has been appointed associate editor of *Farm Life*, Spencer, Ind. He has had a wide and varied experience with the farm press.

Postal rate revision, despite general protests of publishers against the present system, is not likely to be taken up by Congress for at least a year, according to members of the Washington committees quoted recently by *Editor & Publisher*.

Harper & Brothers have published the *Harper's Magazine* prize short-stories for 1925 in book form.

John N. Wheeler has resigned his editorship of *Liberty*, with which he has been associated since its birth in 1924. His successor has not been chosen. Harvey Deuell, managing editor, is acting as editor.

The committee of final award in the John Golden American play contest, which closed several months ago, has announced that of the thousands of plays submitted, there are not three which they felt justified in presenting to Mr. Golden for production as submitted. To avoid calling the contest a failure, they have selected three plays and sent them to the authors, with instructions to revise and return to the committee before January 1.

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Jean Stratton Porter's "The Keeper of the Bees," has been heading the list of best selling novels, for the past few months. A memorial to Mrs. Porter is being planned by Decatur, Ind., citizens. A fifty-ton boulder may be rolled to the edge of the Limberlost swamp, made famous by her work, and marked by a bronze tablet.

The twelfth annual Helen Haire Levinson prize of \$200 for the best poem by a citizen of the United States, was awarded in October by *Poetry* magazine, to Ralph Cheever Durning, an American poet residing in Paris, for a group entitled "The Four Winds." Mrs. Edgar Speyer of New York was awarded second prize of \$100 for her "Ballad of a Lost House."

Stewart Edward White, novelist, author of "The Leopard Woman," etc., returned in the latter part of October from a nine-months' trip hunting big game in Africa.

Courtney Ryley Cooper, popular author, took a flyer on the vaudeville stage during the past month, being featured at the Empress Theater, Denver, in a humorous yarn-spinning monologue.

Herbert R. Gibbs, for twenty-five years chief manuscript reader for Houghton Mifflin & Co., died December 6th at Newtonville, Mass.

One of the largest stock dividends on record was made during Christmas week by the Curtis Publishing Company, publisher of *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Country Gentleman*, and the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, when the preferred stock was increased from 200,000 to 900,000 shares, and the extra shares, valued at \$70,000,000, were distributed among the holders of the 900,000 shares of common stock. The earnings of the Curtis Publishing Company have been estimated at in excess of \$16,000,000 a year.

*The Nation*, 20 Vesey Street, New York, announces that one of its editors, Lewis S. Gannett, has gone to China to study problems there, and during his absence his position will be filled by Stuart Chase.



### Prize Contests

(Continued from Page 32)

"Cheers and Hisses," a department of *Motion Picture Magazine*, 175 Duffield Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., pays \$5 for the best letter published and illustrated on its page and \$1 for the excerpts printed from others on subjects relating to the movies and their players. Letters should contain reasons for likes and dislikes and be not over 300 words in length.

*Liberty*, P. O. Box 1123, Chicago, offers four weekly prizes of \$100 each for the best "Nut-Crackers." The problem is to insert words and last lines to complete unfinished limericks published in each issue.